NOTES AND COMMENTS

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The Faculty of Mental Memory

MEMORY has been described as "the faculty of the mind by which it retains, and reproduces at will, past events". The inventor of this definition must have been an optimist. Most of us know, to our sorrow, that our minds retain only scattered fragments of the past, and that even these poor rags and tatters are deformed almost beyond recognition. How many can "reproduce at will" any episode, exactly as it occurred? The mind is always dredging images out of the chasms of the subconscious, but how often do we exercise the least conscious control over this operation? If we really try to remember anything, how often do we succeed?

The faculty of *mental* memory may be regarded as a specialized instrument, primarily devised to preserve and to make available, to our personal consciousness, the lessons of past experience. To take a classical example, the child who remembers what happened when he touched a red-hot stove, will refrain from repeating the experiment. He retains, and reproduces at will, a past event, because he has assimilated his experience of that event. In the course of time, if the assimilation be complete enough, it will be unnecessary to recall the experience by a mental effort. Whenever he has to choose between touching and not touching a hot stove, his normal, spontaneous, automatic reaction will be not to touch it. A habit—in this case, a good habit—will have been established.

Unfortunately we do not always or often learn the lessons of life as easily as the child learns the lesson inculcated by the hot stove. Experience is, or should be, the food of the soul. However, it is not enough that we should swallow it; it must be subjected to an inner metabolism, before it can be assimilated and become part of our nature. Our inner health, moreover, depends upon the particular ingredients of experience which are assimilated. Every experience, as *Through The Gates of Gold* informs us, yields either a grain of poison or a drop of the elixir of life. We can assimilate the poison and reject the elixir. In

such circumstances, it is no wonder that our memories, like our dreams, so often assume the pattern of a crazy-quilt. The dregs of the subconscious are charged with toxins which act upon the mind, as a putrefying substance acts upon the body, as "the vile emanations of the earth (moral and physical) upon which the Astral Light is fed, are all converted into their subtlest essence, and radiated back intensified, thus becoming epidemics—moral, psychic and physical" (*Theosophical Glossary*, p. 35).

Organic Memory

The references to the Astral Light in theosophical literature suggest that memory is not merely a mental faculty limited to man and a few of the higher animals on this planet; that wherever there is any existence, macrocosmic or microcosmic, in any kingdom, upon any plane, experience of some kind is being assimilated by some process of consciousness, which in some way corresponds to what we call memory. Thus the Cosmos has a "memory", and so has every atom within the Cosmos; and there is a "memory" of the earth, distinct from, though including, the "memories" of all its denizens, visible and invisible, "from mineral and plant, up to the holiest Archangel".

By analogy, in the human being, there is not only the memory of the mind, but also there are the "memories" of all his other principles and sub-principles, from the lowest to the highest. Every organ, as well as every cell of his physical body, of all his "bodies", contributes its quota of assimilated experience to the whole. His entire organism is indeed charged with "memories" which are in one sense not his personal property, coming to him, as they do, from the interminable line of his ancestors. To such an order belong the "astral moulds" of the physiological habits and instincts which he shares with the animals. He is overshadowed, sometimes possessed by subconscious impulses, derived both from his family and from the *skandhas*, the seeds of the "memories" of past births. According to the degree of his development, he is influenced, consciously or "superconsciously", by the "memories" of the soul.

The sum-total or synthesis of all these "memories" has been called "organic memory", to distinguish it from ordinary "mental memory". Some psychologists identify it with the so-called "subconscious", but as we have suggested, it is much more than that. It might be described as a composite faculty which, for the most part without our conscious knowledge, has stored up and utilizes the manifold experiences of every conceivable order, garnered during countless æons along innumerable lines of evolution. But in its immediate activities, it may be the cause of many disasters. Like the Astral Light, it may be said to "give out nothing but what it has received", and in the course of our wanderings, recent and remote, in space and time, we have retained many "astral moulds" which are unpleasant, and others which are ghastly to behold.

The Control of Habit

There is an old axiom: "Nature loves to repeat herself." The underlying principle seems to be that it is only by constant repetition that the average

experience can be adequately assimilated. We can observe the usefulness of repetition in the evolution of reflexes and instincts in the animal kingdom. How can any human aptitude or efficiency be acquired, if not by constant and unremitting practice, by doing the same thing over and over again, until a particular series of actions has become habitual and virtually automatic? This rule applies equally, whether we be learning dancing or singing or mathematics or the art of holiness. In each instance, memory-images are deliberately strengthened by repetition, so as to establish the mould of a habit.

It has been said that whenever we put force into a thought, it "coalesces with an elemental", becoming a semi-independent entity, living with our life, and renewing its vitality by prompting us to repeat the experience through which it was born. But many of our thoughts and deeds do not bear repetition; and the continued presence of certain "dynamic mind-images" below the "threshold of consciousness", implies that we shall be instigated to commit the same follies again and again.

Are we aware of the degree to which we have become "creatures of habit"? The faculty of organic memory—doubtless serving the demands of Karma—takes advantage of any sensation, even of a muscular contraction, to re-vivify an "astral mould", a "habit", to which we are still attached by some secret or avowed desire or fear. The tyranny of habit is often visibly manifested by some "organic trick" to which the body is subject, by a tic or nervous reflex or habitual gesture or cliché, which is an ever-present source of annoyance to our friends. There is truth in the modern psychiatric theory that disease symptoms can be caused by obsessions of consciousness, that is to say, by psychic habits over which even a semblance of control has been lost.

To conserve sanity and bodily health, it is necessary to control our habits and to anticipate their recurrence, whenever this is possible, as a skilful driver must not only understand the idiosyncrasies of his horse but must know when to expect their manifestation. This means that we must set to work to liberate the force which in the past we imprisoned in the "dynamic mind images", the memories, that are the basis of our bad or useless habits. Certainly the past moment cannot be erased; it is engraved upon the "tablets of the Astral Light". But our whole attitude towards the past moment can be changed. How can we make any real progress towards the realization of our divine destiny, until we learn how to transform the meaning of past experience?

The Transformation of Memory-Images

For example, let us imagine a man who is a coward. Time after time he has fled his enemies, real and imagined, and as a result his mind is haunted by dread and apprehension, haunted above all by the persistent image of himself in flight from every battlefield. But he is finally brought to the point where he realizes, at least intellectually, that his soul is by its very nature courageous, because his soul, being a ray or spark of his Master's life, must participate in the superlative courage of the Master. He understands that if he persevere and trust in his Master's power, he will be able to make that potential courage

of the soul manifest in every department of his personal life. Let us suppose that he succeeds. Must there not be a complete transformation of his memory-images? The past events which formerly terrorized him, no longer suggest episodes in a drama of defeat. What was once seen as cowardice, impelling him to fresh acts of cowardice, now appears as an enemy which he has overcome. He thinks of his unhappy past, as a mountaineer, standing on the summit, thinks of the deadly perils of the ascent as obstacles which he has passed, as episodes which enhance the value of his victory.

The Memory of the Heart

There is a memory of the heart, of the soul. As Napoleon remarked, it is the only form of memory which can really preserve past experience without deformation. Las Cases notes in the *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène:* "The Emperor said that his memory was of the heart, and that it preserved the faithful remembrance of all that was dear to him."

Everyone must have experienced, in some degree, the power of the memory of the heart. The remembrance of a person, of a dog, even of an inanimate object, which we have loved and still love, does not fade away. Thus a long-forgotten scene, a landscape which has deeply moved us, can be suddenly evoked by some magical suggestion conveyed by the most casual incident, by a perfume or the sound of a distant bell. We open a damp old wardrobe, and the odour of musty wood transports us across the years to a little inn at Barbizon. Once more we look out into the green twilight of the forest, and hear the dripping of the rain and the song of the chaffinch.

The Memory of the Immortal

In the heart, as the Upanishads teach, dwells the Immortal. The real memory of the heart is a sacred and intimate treasure, the unique possession of the individual soul, for it is the gift of the Master, part of the memory of the Immortal who is the father of that soul. By love and aspiration, it is said, the memory of the chêla can be purified, transmuted, actually as well as potentially made one with the memory of the Master; in so far as he attains union, the chêla remembers what his Master remembers. This would seem to be the clue to Plato's meaning when he spoke of the soul's innate power to recollect the Divine Ideas. Many saints and mystics have testified to the experience of *re-living* an episode of their Master's life as intensely, as *personally*, as if they had themselves physically experienced it. The Passion and Resurrection of the Master Christ are not regarded by the disciple merely as historical episodes; they are part of his own true biography.

Have we often considered what the memory of a Master may be like? It must be a memory of joy, for it is a memory of love, even though it preserves the experience of all the wounds which love has suffered in a warfare which is without beginning or end. It must be a memory which can "reproduce at will", without any dimming effect by time, the real form of a past event; the Master sees time *sub specie æternitatis*. In the world where the Masters live, according

to the testimony of those who have dwelt there, the past is as living and as immediate as the present; in one sense, it is inseparable from the present (and the future). As an Eastern Master wrote many years ago: "I feel even irritated at having to use these three clumsy words—Past, Present and Future. Miserable concept of the objective phases of the subjective whole, they are about as ill-adapted for the purpose, as an axe for fine carving" (*The Occult World*, p. 145).

The Balance-Sheet of a Lifetime

It may be suggested that when the balance-sheet of a lifetime is presented to the "Recording Angels", they are primarily concerned with the memories which have settled in the heart. They are probably much less interested than we suppose in our successes and failures, in our achievements and deficiencies, even in our virtues and vices. That which really matters is what we have stored up in our hearts, the things which we remember most spontaneously because they are most dear to us. If the soul has grown any wiser in its affections, if it has learned anything from its mistakes, it can scarcely matter in the Eternal how many mistakes it may have made. The whole life may have been a "comedy of errors", but if the lesson of even one error be learned, it ceases to be a stimulus to continued defeat, and becomes instead an incentive to victory.

A Famous American Becomes a Philosopher

These last reflections are suggested by an interview with Mr. Henry Ford, published in honour of his seventy-fifth birthday by the *New York Times Magazine*, July 24, 1938. Mr. Ford has done many strange and outlandish things in the course of a long and active life. The too famous "peace-ship" is only one of many examples. He has deluded himself and others by the doctrine that the multiplication of cheap automobiles, bought on credit, has immeasurably increased the happiness of the human race. The casual observer of his activities might easily infer that they had been little likely to lead him to any true perception of spiritual values. Perhaps, he is a bundle of contradictions. In part of his nature, at any event, he now reveals an affinity with the tragically small group of mankind who seek and find some meaning in the events of their lives, and who can, in consequence, profit from errors and defeats. He may have said that "history is bunk", but no disciple of Confucius could speak more respectfully of experience. It is not enough to say that he has succeeded where others failed, because when others dreamed he acted. The real point is that he has recognized many mistakes and has learned from them. He learned, as it seems, for the simple reason that he has always been ready to test the validity of his oddest theories by actual experiment. What is more, he has undertaken full responsibility, paying for his experience with his own money. Unlike many of his contemporaries, he has not experimented at others' expense. It would seem that few men in public life to-day have been as consistently sincere as Mr. Ford.

"The Most Valuable Thing in the World"

Mr. Ford was an intimate friend of Thomas Edison, who was at one time a

member of The Theosophical Society. This may account in part for his references to Reincarnation and Karma; but it is evident that the philosophy of life which he outlines is his own, the product of his own meditations. "In the evening of the day comes quietude, and with quietude wisdom."

"Do your own work, don't indulge in controversies", Mr. Ford said. "Don't let argument lead to quarrels; if the matter is one you can do something about—do it; if not, wait until you can. I can honestly say that in my case money has been a by-product. I never kept it in my mind. But I think I always had a subconscious belief that anyone who does anything useful will not go unpaid. There's a higher law that looks after that. From the time I worked on the farm . . . the best pay I ever got was experience, which I think is still the most valuable thing in the world. That's what we are put in the world for, to get experience and to help others get it. It is the one thing no one can take away from us. No, I've never laid out a system of life. Just go ahead, and do the job that one is called upon to do—that is system enough. How can anyone say how he will act to-morrow when he doesn't know what will happen to-day?" . . .

"What is instinct?" Mr. Ford was asked.

"Probably the essence of past experience and knowledge stored up for future use."

"Transmitted to us by our forebears?"

"Not necessarily. Little is known about inheritance. Suppose we inherit from ourselves—from our own past? There are many, you know, who think this life journey through the world is not the first one we have made. Haven't you ever come across children who knew things which it was impossible for them to have learned? Have you ever gone to a place for the first time and felt sure that you had been there before?" . . .

Mr. Ford said that, if he had the opportunity of living his life over again, there are few things he would do differently from the way that he had done them. "I couldn't even if I wanted to. There are some things we must do in order to be true to ourselves. Even a mistake may turn out to be the one thing necessary to a worth-while achievement." It is for that reason that Mr. Ford does not believe in what is ordinarily called luck; he thinks that often what is regarded as hard luck is an experience which, if properly judged, can react to advantage.

The Art of Being True to Oneself

The general truth of Mr. Ford's message is self-evident. With one of his statements, as he has phrased it, we are, however, constrained to disagree. Who would not do many things differently, if he had the opportunity of living his life over again? The great consolation which the doctrine of Reincarnation brings, is that we do have this opportunity, with added experience. Our errors are not irreparable. There will be ample opportunity to correct them in the future. Furthermore, we are only true to ourselves in the measure that we do correct them and learn from them. We are not living in accordance with the real nature of things so long as we regard it as inevitable that we must make the same mistakes time after time, and learn nothing. Mr. Ford may have profited more than most men from the observation of his own follies, but he surely would not claim that he has profited to the utmost. And that is what sooner or later must be done by every soul. The maximum profit must be extracted from every experience. When that blissful state is reached, it would seem that the soul stands indeed upon the threshold of Nirvana, for there would scarcely be any further necessity for incarnation, as we understand it. But until this art of being true to oneself is thoroughly mastered, nothing is gained

by a feeling of more or less complete satisfaction with our actual attainment. Perhaps Mr. Ford has not that feeling, but his words are unhappy in suggesting it.

"Optimum Conditions of Growth"

Mr. Ford has had one advantage. He has spent his life in contact with facts; for machines may be soulless, but at least they are concrete and actual things. Many university professors are not so fortunate, for they are in daily contact, not with facts but with notions about facts.

This may partly explain some of the things which are said at congresses of learned men. For instance, at the recent meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, in Ottawa, Professor Frank S. Freeman made some generalizations about "public education in a democracy". The present fad is to regard heredity as less important in the fashioning of character than environment, and this provided Professor Freeman with the subject-matter for a thesis:

> This revised concept of the development of mental abilities has far-reaching educational implications. It means that an individual's possibilities of development cannot be known and realized until optimum conditions of growth are provided practically from birth; that social and economic factors and all that they imply are at least as significant in the determination of ability differences as are genetic factors, and that much potential talent goes undeveloped for want of proper nurture, both physical and psychological. Public education in a democracy that seeks to develop and foster all its human resources will have to look forward to providing pre-school education for all in respect to both mental and physical development. It is not enough to urge that talented boys and girls of whatever economic stratum should have opportunity for higher education.

Like so many of the pronouncements of "intellectuals", this sounds amiable and innocent at first reading. Then we stop and wonder what Professor Freeman means by "optimum conditions of growth". Whatever he may mean, it is quite certain that every other professor would mean something else. As a matter of fact, various political groups and their leaders have already decided the question for themselves. Mussolini, Hitler and Stalin have very definite views about "optimum conditions of growth", and they lack patience with anyone who disagrees.

It is impossible to say into what shapes the "potential talent" of Italy, Germany and Russia will develop. God only knows, in any case, what is the "potential talent" of anybody. In the deepest of all possible senses, every soul is doubtless "an inlet to the Over-Soul, and to all of the same", but that does not imply that God expects every child to become at once a Buddha or a Plato.

Theosophy iterates and re-iterates one simple hypothesis, that wherever one is placed by Nature and Karma, one finds the "optimum conditions of growth" *for the soul*. The physical and psychic environment will inevitably change, as the needs of the soul change. The valorous and determined individual does not remain in bondage to any set of circumstances. The self-made man whom Americans formerly delighted to honour, grew often to gigantic proportions, without any "social and economic advantages", sometimes with nothing but

the bare rudiments of a primary school education. He made himself what he became, because he was instructed by his own experience and by observing the experience of others.

No man can be made to become anything, if he be a man. A "scientific" system of nurture might conceivably produce a nation of creatures which would do and say what it was told to do and say, but it would be a nation of automata and robots, not of human beings. It is so much simpler to do one's own duty as best one can, and to leave to Nature at least part of the burden of developing and fostering "all the resources" of everybody else. If a man's talents need development, as surely as Justice rules the world, he will be given a chance to succeed, and if his aspirations be real, opposition, difficulty, even poverty (that terrible spectre of the modern mind) will not daunt him but will only temper the steel of his will.

Failure

It may be suggested in this connection that failure is as misunderstood as poverty, in the modern world. So much failure is not failure at all. If a man cannot see for himself the beauty of the "Victory of Samothrace", why blame him? He is simply as yet incapable of experiencing the beauty, as a dog would be incapable. His "failure" is as much an illusion as, in a different sense, is that of the artist struggling to bring some creation to birth, who rejects his first production because it inadequately expresses his idea. There is yet another kind of "failure" which should indeed awaken intense sympathy, although it must be sent by the Good Law, by a Divine Compassion. Many are born into the world with certain obvious talents which they cannot develop, in spite of all their efforts and in spite of every favourable condition. If we really believe in Reincarnation and Karma, we can recognize the possibility that in other lives this particular talent had been over-developed at the expense of other qualities necessary to the soul, and that the use of it is denied in the present life to provide an opportunity for a fuller and better rounded growth.

There is only one certain failure,—the deliberate refusal to conform action to a standard which one knows to be beautiful and true.

One Purpose of Education

As history reveals, a civilization exists as long as it can transmit to the future what it has learned in the past. Each generation should add to the sum-total of knowledge, but it must build upon foundations already laid. "A nation loses its life", said Marshal Foch, "only when it has lost its memories", that is, its traditions.

Certainly one purpose of education is to ensure the preservation of the acquired knowledge (spiritual, moral, intellectual and physical) of the race. But very few citizens have the capacity to assimilate more than a small fraction of that knowledge. Formerly, when primary education at least was a function of the Church and the family, the principal object was to impress upon the child's mind and heart certain elementary truths concerning good and evil, right and wrong. Like the Ten Commandments and their counterparts in other religions,

these truths are the fruit of a mass of experience dating back to the infancy of humanity. They must be made part of the child's habitual consciousness, if he is to become even a potential human being. They are incomparably more necessary and more important than reading and writing and arithmetic, not to mention economics, sociology, æsthetics and "tap-dancing". We venture to suggest that if the modern educator would lay aside some of his theories and, especially in the primary grades, would concentrate upon the teaching of the indispensable principles of ethics, the "potential talents" of the infants entrusted to him would take care of themselves. In any event these principles are needed equally by the man of genius and by the humblest entity in human shape.

The Pivotal Doctrine of the Esoteric Philosophy

It is too easy to lose sight of the mountain-peaks which we must climb to attain our true human heritage. We are not invited by the Logos to a light and frivolous undertaking. Consider the far vistas opened to vision by the third "fundamental proposition" of *The Secret Doctrine:*

> The fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root; and the obligatory pilgrimage for every Soul—a spark of the former—through the Cycle of Incarnation, or Necessity, in accordance with Cyclic and Karmic Law, during the whole term. In other words, no purely spiritual Buddhi (Divine Soul) can have an independent conscious existence before the spark which issued from the pure Essence of the Universal Sixth Principle—or the OVER-SOUL—has (a) passed through every elemental form of the phenomenal world of that Manvantara, and (b) acquired individuality, first by natural impulse, and then by self-induced and self-devised efforts, checked by its Karma, thus ascending through all the degrees of intelligence from the lowest to the highest Manas. . . . The pivotal doctrine of the Esoteric Philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in man, save those won by his own Ego through personal effort and merit throughout a long series of metempsychoses and reincarnations (ed. 1888, I, 17).

All states of consciousness, all talents potential or realized, all experiences, all "memories of the heart" are significant, in so far as they reveal some aspect of the Eternal and enlighten the way to the Eternal. For the aspirant to chêlaship this specifically signifies that his life and its powers exist for one purpose, as a bridge leading him to immediate knowledge of the Master at the head of his Ray, who has already attained "individual conscious existence", in union with the Over-Soul, with the Spirit of the Lodge.

Memory and Self-realization

As one indispensable means to this true Self-realization, there must be a progressive transformation of our "dynamic mind-images", a progressive change of attitude towards the past. This is a task which can be begun here and now, the sooner the better. Certain things which can be done are self-evident.

We can quicken the processes of self-examination, in a whole-hearted attempt to understand and to overpower the elemental lives and forces animating the bad habits of mind and body, and inciting us to repeat the foolish and vicious acts of the past. We can train the mind to associate the image of what we ac-

tually did on some particular occasion, with the ideal of what we should have done, so that we cannot recall the former without simultaneously recalling the latter. M. Jacques d'Arnoux refers to this aspect of recollection:

> The memory of heroes is not only the guardian of the sacred fire. It should not only be filled with glowing coals. It is also a watch which should remain ceaselessly on the alert, and which should never forget the reefs and the shipwrecks. If it does not each day register your weaknesses, you will never reform yourself completely. "A life without self-examination is not a life", said the philosopher. Certain weaknesses are so habitual for you, that you yield to them without being aware of it. It is only by the tenacious recollection of these weaknesses that, little by little, you become conscious of them and will finally react at the right time (*Les Sept Colonnes de l'Héroisme*, p. 305).

We can face each experience as it happens, with the conviction that it is a sentence in the Book of Life, a sentence placed there by Nature, by Karma, by our Master for our edification. This conviction, firmly held, will link the remembrance of the experience with the thought of a spiritual purpose informing all events, and with the idea of the Masters' constant intervention in the affairs of men.

Such an association of memories and images is not hard to imagine, for it involves the use of a faculty with which we are thoroughly familiar. If we have visited a place with someone we love, our pleasure in bringing back its image is inextricably identified with the feeling that we share the pleasure and the remembrance with another.

This suggests what may be described as the highest state of consciousness attainable by man, the state which in mystical treatises is called Union, when "this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality". The true occultism teaches the art of sharing the consciousness of the Masters, of participating in their experience and their memory. In every religion, there have been those who attained some degree of perfection in this art. Thus the follower of Osiris in ancient Egypt became the "Osirified"; thus the *bhakti yoga* of India united the devotee with the Lord Krishna or with some other manifestation of the Supreme, and the Christian saints have participated in the Agony and Passion of the Master Christ.

Many students of Theosophy have pledged themselves to work for the preservation of chêlaship as a living fact in the world. Reflecting upon the gifts of the Lodge to The Theosophical Society since its inception, some students would consider it disgraceful to believe that what has been possible for others is impossible for them.

FRAGMENTS

TO THE disciple there is but one way in which any action, even the most insignificant, can be performed, and that is the Master's way. Every motion, every word, every thought, must be cast in this mould, and bear the stamp of its exalted origin and pattern. Thus the disciple's life becomes a sanctified life, and all that he breathes or touches bears his Master's seal.

Yet for each of his children the Master will have a special way, since each will represent a particular colour of the spectrum in the group to which the Master has seen fit to assign him. Therefore the disciple will never demand that his way must be followed by others, for, if so blind as to make the attempt, he may find that he has been contravening the Master's will, and become a force of disruption, not of cohesion.

What he must look for, and insist upon finding, in his brother's way, is the Master's hall-mark. If this be discovered he will rest content, however different in expression that way may appear from his own. Without that hall-mark, however, no course of procedure, no postulate of life, will any disciple endure or condone, since to do so would involve the infraction of fundamental spiritual principle; and such tolerance is no real tolerance, but moral laxity and license, and destroys the integrity of the soul.

Humility is a fundamental of discipleship, since without it all other virtues are spurious. No virtue is so little understood, and its psychic counterfeit is more often seen than the reality. A genuine humility does not create weaklings, nor impair true dignity. It represents a detachment and impersonality so complete, that the disciple's stature is raised, not lowered. By it he is set apart from other men because so ennobled above them. Humility transfigures. It alone can make a man sublime.

No day has been lived as by a disciple, unless at its close there is some sacri-

fice that can be offered, as the result of which that much of self has been lost, and that much of the Master acquired.

When the disciple receives a grace he imparts it. If it be not imparted, by his mere presence, it has never really been received. The light has been shed upon him, but he has failed to become incandescent.

When the day is ending, its work completed, and the mind and body are weary, fold the hands, close the eyes, turn inward. In every heart there is a little wicket gate,—open it, pass through. It is another world. An atmosphere of quiet pervades it which is full of healing. When you have bathed in it for a space, the cares and the griefs slip off and melt away in the shadows. There is a path leading on through the fragrant coolness. It winds and turns. Some one is waiting beyond there. With a prayer on your lips, go on. Perhaps, O heart, perhaps you will meet Him!

CAVÉ.

LIVING PICTURES

IF YOU think you can jump a fence, you may fail when you try. But if you are convinced you cannot jump it, you will certainly fail. Indeed you will not even try. You may, of course, be shamed into something you would like to have look like trying. You may run at it with a grim face, but at the last moment you will balk, or at best make a feeble little spring that does not employ any appreciable fraction of your real muscular power,—and this though, in feet and inches, the fence be lower than many others you jump with ease. Dominated by the notion that it is too high for you, you cannot "see yourself" clearing it, and in the absence of such a picture, you have no chart for the required action. With the exception of the automatic jerkings that are the merely mechanical reaction of our nerves to external stimuli, we never act save upon some previously conceived, or perceived, picture of the act; and if anything prohibits the formation of the picture, the act itself becomes impossible. A lack of confidence can thus paralyze your powers by first paralyzing your imagination. But, as here, it can go further, and instead of merely immobilizing your imagination, it may mobilize it against you. In place of a picture that you wish your jump to fulfil, your mental conviction that it is impossible conjures up a horrid presentment of your tripping on the top bar, and plunging headlong into whatever lies beyond,—a picture which you definitely do not wish to fill, and which therefore reduces your jump to what may be counted upon not to fill it, but to leave you safe on the near side. You fail because your imagination betrays you, supplying pictures to your fears and not to your will.

From this we may record the following general observation: Our purposes and desires are brought to material fulfilment only through the intermediary of immaterial pictures, and if the right pictures be not supplied, the right actions will not be performed.

There is more than this, however, which it should profit us to note. Whether you took your fence, or, balking at it, found some break through which you crawled, the incident is not over with the mere material fact. It remains with you as an immaterial picture, which you now call, not imagination, but memory. If you took the fence gallantly in your stride, the memory is pleasing. If you funked it, the picture is not pleasing, but so painfully at variance with the way in which you wish to see yourself, so unassimilable to your self-esteem, that you feel something must be done about it. If you have the courage to look at the picture squarely, you may see what ought to be done, and set your will to its doing thereafter. But as your fears captured your imagination before, so may they again,—though now their concern is for your vanity. If so, you will, metaphorically, again seek a hole through which to crawl. After one sidelong, protesting glance at the record as it stands, you will look away; and while your back is thus ostentatiously turned, your imagination feverishly smudges the

outlines and redraws and embroiders the picture, until its ugliness is overlaid and concealed. The fence is sketched so high that, obviously, no one could have jumped it,—quite justifying your original conviction, and showing that the real problem was to find just such a break in the barrier as you, very cleverly, discovered. Or you "remember" that, as you were about to spring, your foot slipped and your ankle turned,—indeed, when you think about it, it is still painful, and you may even limp a little. Or, etc., etc. By one subterfuge or another, the picture is made bearable, and thereafter, consciously or unconsciously, your effort is to accept the revised version as true. The worst of it is that you may succeed, at least in part.

If you do succeed, a long line of most undesirable consequences will be entailed, with only one of which, however, do we need to concern ourselves immediately. Refusing to face your failure at the fence, fleeing from fact to fiction, whatever lesson of self-knowledge it might have taught you will not have been learned, and you will, instead, have both deepened your self-deception and corrupted your will to its defence.

From this we may draw a second general observation, to put alongside the first: Our actions can yield us self-knowledge, and material events can be distilled into the wisdom of experience, only through the intermediary of immaterial pictures; and if the pictures be spurious, they entrench us in error.

These two observations together indicate the course followed by our actions. From whatever inner centre they originate—whether in duty, or reason, or desire—they pass outward through a surrounding belt or zone of pictures, which both separates these inner centres from, and connects them with, the outer physical world. In this picture-zone is formed the model which the physical action is to copy. And this copy, perfect or imperfect, as it has been impressed upon the outer world by the act, is reflected back, with its results and consequences, into the picture-zone, serving as the carrier through which the harvest of the act is returned to the centre that initiated it. The picture-zone, through which our actions thus make a double passage, is part of what, in theosophical literature, has been called the "astral" plane, the name simply meaning starry, or self-luminous. This points to the characteristic ability of the pictures, not merely to reflect what they represent, but actually to embody it, so that they are truly "living pictures", luminous from within, as are the stars and sun, and not merely shining with borrowed light, as does the moon. And as the light of the sun is fraught with the energies of heat, and subtile, quickening forces, which work upon all that its rays touch, so the light from each of these astral images, bearing the contagion of its inhabiting life, affects all upon which it falls. The most cursory glance at our daily experience is sufficient to show the tremendous power—too often virulent—of this astral contagion.

"Injuries", cried Bishop Joseph Hall three hundred years ago, "hurt not more in the receiving than in the remembrance. A small injury shall go as it comes; a great injury may dine or sup with me; but none at all shall lodge with me. Why should I vex myself because another hath vexed me? Grief for things past that cannot be remedied, and care for things to come that cannot be pre-

vented, may easily hurt, can never benefit me. I will therefore commit myself to God in both, and enjoy the present."

Which of us, making that resolve, has not, again and again, met defeat in it, as grief and care pressed upon him, and the light of the astral images incarnating them, shone through his closed eyelids? Or which of us has not found, as Socrates warned Xenophon, that the images of desire are more formidable than tarantulas? For the tarantula can bite only on contact, whereas the distant vision of such images, the mere light that shines from them, may be sufficient to instil their poison and deprive men of their senses. If we are to be the masters of our own actions, therefore, and understand, as we should, the forces which constantly contend against us for that mastery, we shall do well to consider how we deal with the pictures and forces of the astral plane.

To make our inquiry specific we may continue to use the regrettable incident at the fence, and note, first, the part played in it by the desire to "save face",—that is, the desire to preserve intact the face, or picture, which we present to others and which we wish to believe ourselves. The more closely we examine it, the more apparent it becomes that the chief cohesive force, which holds together the bundle of contradictions that make up our lower nature, is this picture of ourselves which our wishful thinking creates. So long as we identify ourselves with our lower nature, anything which threatens it, appears to threaten us; and therefore in this part of our being—the part that is native to the lower astral plane—the desire to preserve our picture of ourselves corresponds to, and is as strong and as instinctive as the animal instinct of self-preservation. We can recognize the operation of both of these instincts in the incident before us. It is through the first that one can be "shamed" into pretence—into running at the fence to avoid confessing unwillingness to attempt it and the belief that it is beyond one's powers. And it is the second that causes one to balk at the last moment, when faced with the picture of physical disaster.

Very clearly, also, it was the desire to "save face" in one's own eyes, that led to the pretence and falsification of memory which marked the second phase of the incident. As in the first phase, the pretence was dictated by fear,—not fear of the facts, which were beyond change and which there was no attempt to supplement, but fear of the picture of the facts, lest, if it were admitted to consciousness, it should shatter with its incongruity the astral image which your self-esteem had formed and which held your sense of self-identity. It seems a strange paradox that any stratum of our human nature should prefer to fail again and again in the same way, rather than to admit to itself that it had ever failed in that way—prefer to descend anew to cowardice and deceit, rather than to acknowledge that it had once been afraid. Yet we find it illustrated every day; and the reason for it is that our actions in the physical world, as we have noted, can bear their harvest back to consciousness only by traversing the astral zone, and only through the medium of astral images. To that part of a man's nature, therefore, which, like his vanity, is concerned chiefly with the impact of such images upon his picture of himself, the physical facts seem of very minor importance in comparison with their reflections, and it seems easy

to believe that, if only the pictures can be shut out or made harmless, the facts can be safely ignored.

We have come to a point where we must change the form of our discourse. We are no longer willing to refer to the depraved object we are dissecting, as "you". Nor are we willing to cover it with a collective "we". It is neither "you" nor "I", neither your real self nor mine, and it is more than time that this should be recognized. It is something other than either of us; it is an "it". Indeed it is not even an "it", it is a "they",—a congeries of astral images, inhabited and animated by elemental impulses and desires and the raw stuff of the qualities of nature, all held together, despite their internecine warfare, by the use you have made and continue to make of them, by your extending to them your sense of self-identification and including them in the astral picture you have made of yourself. It may seem strange to say this, when we have seen how desperately a man may struggle to exclude from that picture everything he thinks shameful. But his very effort to exclude it, testifies to his awareness of its presence. His denials never wholly convince him; his self-deception is never complete; and in resorting to it he renews and engraves more deeply the very lines of shame he wishes to erase. What they depict is, truly, not himself, save as he has made it himself by using it. But having used it, he must answer for it. All that we employ in our service dons our livery; and we are in pawn to our servants until their wages are paid. As the folk-lore of all races has recorded, there is but one bargain that the devil will make with man. Evil will work for him only in return for the pledge of his soul. Its wage is the extension to it of man's own sense of self. Man cannot lie and seek refuge in pretence, without being forced, sooner or later, to see himself as a liar and a cheat. It is against this that he fights as long as he can; but in it is his salvation. For when he sees and owns himself cheat and liar, in that act he ceases to lie and cheat. In it he pays the devil his wage, and can dismiss and be free of him. He loses his life—the picture he has treasured of it lies in shattered fragments—but in the loss of the false he finds the way to the true. The bundle of incongruities, no longer held together by his will, falls apart; and from its contents he may choose anew what he will retain.

We are not wise, therefore, in struggling, as we so often do, to postpone payment of whatever may be the devil's bill against us. It is far better to pay as we go. Wherever we fail, there we need the lessons which an honest fronting of our failure should teach us, and which we miss when we try to blind ourselves to it. We shall not reach our goal by trying to persuade ourselves that we are already there; nor improve, by insisting that we have nothing to correct. As the roots of a tree draw from the mulch of its own fallen leaves, so man's most vigorous growth springs from a soil fertilized with the purified purgations of his failures.

So much for the part played by the desire to "save face". But the self-reference and self-picturing which underlies it, entered into the incident at the fence in yet another way. We noted that our hero (we must call him something) could not "see himself" clearing it. That, then, had been his effort—as

it is so common and unfortunate a habit, in men's undertakings, for them to visualize themselves as the actor, rather than to view impersonally the action to be performed. They try to look at several things at once, instead of at only one, and in consequence what they do is not clean cut, nor directed to a single end, but is at best a compromise between different, and not infrequently diametrically divergent, aims. So here, the man tried to look (1) to his habitual picture of himself and his powers; and (2) to the action which the jump required; and (3) to his own safety. This was only prudent of him, if no duty necessitated the jump and no decision regarding it had been made. It was but prudent, too, that judging these pictures incompatible, he should be loth to attempt the leap. But once it had been decided upon, his whole attention should have been focussed upon the action demanded, leaving no room for anything else. Instead, he continued to look at his pictures of himself, and in the resulting division and diversion of his will, his action was reduced to mere futility or pretence. The factor which became dominant, was, as we saw, his instinct of self-preservation. But even where no question of personal safety is involved, any thought of oneself, any self-consciousness bringing before our inner eyes a picture of self with its familiar characteristics, aptitudes and limitations, must inevitably hamper us in situations foreign to our habitual routine. For such pictures are moulds which our actions tend automatically to fill, and which therefore restrict the flexibility and freedom of our powers, inhibiting the evocation of latent abilities, and confining both imagination and action to the bounds which custom has made familiar. Many a man has been held all his life in this hypnosis to the mediocrity of his past, until overwhelming need, in some sharp crisis, released him from it, and he found, to his own later amazement, how simply and easily he had done what he would have declared wholly beyond him.

We are too deeply immersed in "the great heresy of separateness". The universe is one. Life is one. As has been quoted in these pages again and again, but cannot be too constantly emphasized, "there is no bar or wall where man, the effect, ceases, and God, the cause, begins". No picture of ourselves can be complete, or true, therefore, which does not in some way include or foreshadow the whole spiritual hierarchy, rising in endless rank upon rank to the Supreme. Man is not separated from the Whole; and all the powers of the divine, as well as of the human nature lie before us, for us to take what we can. What we did yesterday, we did with yesterday's abilities. What we are to do to-day is for the as yet unplumbed capacities that may to-day be ours. We pray for daily bread. Why should we constantly content ourselves with the stale and mouldy leavings of the past,—look only into our scanty cupboards, and not to the infinite granary of which we have been made free? Or why should we think, when we have filled the little cup we bring, that that is all there is for us? Are there no larger vessels we can offer to be filled? Or can we not come anew as often as we have need?

Let us cease to look at the little man weighed down, before his fence, with the burden of "human respect" and the sense of his inadequacy to his little tasks, fearing the opinion of others, fearing his opinion of himself, fearing for

his "face" and for his neck, crawling through holes, pretending, cheating, futile. Let us look to a wide stage, and to a superb, heroic figure, and see that he became such, and carried through one of the most audacious achievements which history records, only through being freed from the pictures of himself as actor, which first came before his mind and held him back. The details of the procedure are instructive.

Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian. . . . And the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. . . . And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God. And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt; . . . for I know their sorrows. . . . Come now, therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.

And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

It must be granted that Moses had grounds for his question. If ever there were incompatible pictures of the actions to be performed and the actor to perform them, they are presented to us here. Moses, the detected murderer, self-banished from the land, in flight from the king's justice and anger, is to return and stand before him, and wrest from him the release of the large body of labourers and skilled artisans engaged upon the royal works. And looking to the other side of his task, to the people whom he was to make leave their homes and livelihood, and follow him out of the country, neither he nor they knowing where—had he not been most pointedly asked who had made him a prince and judge over them? What was he to say to them? And the Lord answered:

Certainly I will be with thee. . . . Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you. . . . And they shall hearken to thy voice; and thou shalt come, thou and the leaders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us; and now let us go (we beseech thee). . . . And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand. And I will stretch out my hand and smite Egypt with all my wonders, . . . and after that he will let you go.

This was better. He was not to be the actor, after all. And as for Pharaoh—to whom, even when he was *persona grata* at Court, protected by the favour of the Princess, he would never have dared to suggest any change in a royal edict—he was not expected to succeed with him. The plan assumed that he would fail; and then God himself—the same God that was speaking to him—would take over the failure and make it a success. That part of it seemed all right; God, and not he, being responsible for the result. But as for the Hebrews, he still could not "see himself" convincing them; they would not believe that the Lord had appeared to him. The Lord has, therefore, to assure Moses that this, also, is provided for, and that evidence will be produced to assure credence. But Moses is still unsatisfied. He still sees himself incongruous with his rôle. He has to talk, both to Pharaoh and to the Hebrews, as he has never talked in his life.

And Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant; but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? . . . Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.

That ought to have been enough. One by one, the Lord has answered each of Moses's objections, assumed responsibility and taken over the action, so that Moses's pictures of himself have no longer any pertinence. Moses would have done better to acknowledge this, and dismissing his hesitancies then and there, to have given himself wholeheartedly to carrying out the plan. But there still clings to him the last fear our human nature is able to dispel, the haunting dread that though Divine Omnipotence control all else, we ourselves may contrive to defeat it, and God's plan fail because we fail God.

And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and he said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also behold he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart. And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people, . . . and be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God. And Moses went.

He might, as we suggested, have done better had he gone earlier. But we should be the poorer, in the lack of a perfect pattern of how to deal with our last fears when we face a task that seems too great for us. When we have taken each doubt to Him who speaks to us from the Burning Bush and whose voice appoints our undertakings, and have listened to His answers and have seen that it is with His power, and not our own, that the work is to be done, then if there remain some point where self still intrudes, and we fear that there we shall fail and betray Him, we may call a comrade to our aid. Have we not, also, some brother, who, the Lord knows, "speaks well" where we are "of a slow tongue", and whose heart will be glad to go with us as our spokesman, to say the thing the Lord commands us?

Note now how changed are the pictures at which we look. Three stages have been indicated. First, where the pictures of self are so dominant as to inhibit all action that is incompatible with them. Second, where, as sometimes in a crisis, these pictures are all swept away, and the outer need alone is seen, and the man acts swiftly and unconsciously to meet it directly. And third, the stage to which Moses now comes, the stage that leads to chêlaship. There, beyond and within the outer need, the man sees the movement of Divine Powers responding to it. The pictures of self grow dim, as the pictures of the Heavenly Hierarchy grow clearer and stronger, until at last, in chêlaship itself, it is to the Master alone that the chêla looks. Though he fights, not he but the Master is the Warrior. Through him, no longer blocked or hampered by the crystallizations of self, the Master's will is done, and the power of God works the wisdom of God. I live, wrote Paul, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. *Christos theou dunamis theou sophia.* No great or lasting work was ever done by any man in any other way, but only as he looks beyond his separate self to something he

sees as greater than himself, and of which he makes himself the instrument. And this is true whether the results of the work be good or ill. For what man does of his separate, mortal self, must partake of his separateness and mortality. The lie that he tells, he must himself support; and when the burden grows too great and crushes him, his works fall with him. But where he tells the truth, testifying "not of himself" but "of the Father", the Truth itself upholds his testimony. Though you crucify him, his word remains untouched.

The reversal between the first and third of these stages is therefore complete. Instead of futility has come efficiency. Instead of absorption in self, and the bundle of irreconcilables that the man has, by main force, held together as himself, his eyes have opened upon the Hierarchy and brotherhood of the Spirit, and he has let his bundle fall apart. Instead of fear of himself and of others, have come faith in the divine powers of the universe, and trust in his comrades. Where he sought to enlist familiar demons in his service, pledging them his soul in payment, and clothing them in his livery, he now seeks to enlist himself in the service of the Great Lodge, and, as his wage, something of the Masters' spirit is extended to him. Little by little, these new pictures, which he holds before him and upon which he acts, flood his aura with their living light. Little by little, there gather and may be seen around him the colours of his Master's livery.

It is worth while to look back to how this transformation was achieved, and to see that the laws which can govern the tumultuous forces and images of the astral plane, are the mechanical parallels of the spiritual and ethical principles that all religions teach. Humility, honesty, courage, purity of mind and heart and singleness of aim, forgetfulness of self in love of another or in devotion to a cause,—they are all easily traceable in their astral effects. The humble man, "the poor in spirit", is not troubled by the need to "save face". He is not thrown into a panic by the thought that some imperfection may be discovered in his character, nor are his pictures of himself such that he wishes to spend his time contemplating them. Where there is singleness of aim, there is no crowding of conflicting images, all striving to clothe themselves in the same act. So with all the other virtues; they can be known by their fruits.

As the forms of all physical things are astral forms, it is equally true that the mechanics of the astral plane parallels that of the physical plane, thus, like the plane itself, furnishing a link between the spiritual and the physical; and it may be that the astral phenomena we have been considering may be clarified by comparison with the corresponding physical phenomena exhibited in optics by refraction and reflection, the interference of light waves, and the superposition of images. It is interesting that, whereas the ethical parallel serves best to show how the astral images may be purified and the astral forces coordinated to smoother action, it is the physical parallels that best explain their confused conflicts and deceptiveness.

We noted at the outset that, corresponding to the double passage of each of our acts through the astral plane, astral images are formed in two different ways: first, by the direct projection of the act's purpose, as it presses outward

to material fulfilment; and, second, by reflection back from whatever expression it attains. Both sets of pictures are, as we saw, subject to distortion, contradiction, and even suppression and erasure, by the impact and domination of conflicting pictures. But in the one set the distortion may be likened to the foreshortening and elongation, the displacement and interference of images, which may be caused by refraction, while in the other set both refraction and reflection are operative. It is characteristic of reflection that it always produces a reversal, either, as in a vertical mirror, turning right into left, or, as in the horizontal surface of a pool, showing the picture upside down. It is by no means easy, in looking at an astral image, to know how it was formed, and, in consequence, there is often no knowing how it should be interpreted. Dreams, the proverb should read, *may* go by contraries; but whether they do or not, we usually cannot tell. Assuming there were no other distortion, the interpretation would depend upon whether the reflection were from an odd or an even number of surfaces, and upon how these surfaces were placed. We hold a printed page before a mirror, and the reversal from right to left makes it illegible. But use two mirrors and it can again be read. Thus the introduction of another reflecting element may alter the whole picture; and a further source of difficulty is that, whereas a right and left reversal might be likened to a mere change in emphasis, the turning a thing upside down may make it the direct contrary to what it was. In addition to all else, no two reflecting surfaces, if they be living surfaces, ever yield exactly the same picture.

A dog, for example, sees himself very differently when he looks at his master and when he looks at a cat. Let us suppose that, as in a child's primer, a caption had to accompany each of our pictures. One might read: "A boy takes a dog on a chain for a run". The dog spies a cat. The caption must be reversed: "A dog takes a boy on a chain for a run". But if the cat were out of the range of the camera, a snap shot of the one scene might well be taken for the other,—though to both dog and boy the significant content of the picture has been startlingly altered by the change in emphasis. Or consider how essential it is to graciousness that it should not be self-conscious. The moment a man sees himself as gracious he ceases to be so, but becomes its opposite, and his act, instead of being welcomed, is resented. The content of the picture has been turned upside down by its reflection, though, to the casual observer, the opposites might appear outwardly much the same.

But perhaps, of all the sources of confusion, the most prolific is the superposition of images, particularly in the combining of direct and reflected images to form one composite picture. It is thus that glamour arises and deceives us, the inner light of desire being projected upon some outer object, in which it cannot incarnate, but to which the light is thereafter attributed. Which of us does not know that deceitful composite, and the bitterness of disillusionment when it is resolved,—when, after long striving, we have attained our craved-for goal, only to find ourselves in the dead valleys and airless mountains of the moon, with the sun as far distant as before?

Yet in little and in big we are always making such composite pictures. In-

deed, it is the only way that anything is ever made. As Mr. Johnston used to quote to us, Maya is the one Shakti of Atma; and *The Secret Doctrine* makes clear that it is from the *Chhaya*, the images created and left by the past, that the vehicle is fashioned for the incarnation of the new. If we watch the formation of the astral images, we see that there is always this combination of solar and lunar elements: hope and purpose moving to a future end, and drawing, from the memories of former efforts, the elements which, remoulded and recombined, may serve as means. It is the one universal process of creation and incarnation, and by it man does all his works. But by it, too, he has wrought, again and again, his own undoing; and it permits him to create pictures that are most astounding composites in their contradictions. The astral plane is full of them, for there man creates what he wills. It is there, in consequence, that he is in greatest peril. Fortunately for him, in the physical world his freedom is checked and overruled by the unyielding and ineradicable integrity of nature, that will suffer no violation of divine law, and which, sooner or later, dooms to death whatever does not conform to it.

Here we may see why it is that college professors and other theorists often make the most dangerous guides, not only in social and moral affairs, but in all departments of conduct and government. They have habituated themselves to dealing exclusively with astral images, instead of with physical realities; with abstract groupings and generalities instead of with concrete individuals; and instead of moving vertically through the astral plane, from inspiration to physical action, and from physical results back to increased wisdom of experience and renewed inspiration, their thought moves horizontally along the picture-zone, never escaping from it, and in consequence never encountering any corrective to their imaginative entities and assumptions. No small part of the peril and misery of the world to-day is due to this. Labour, Capital, Class Consciousness, Social Security, Collective Bargaining, Aryan, Democracy, Woman's Rights, Self-Determination,—who knows what concrete realities correspond to these words, or to a hundred others, which are dinned ceaselessly in our ears? What are their astral images? How many self-contradictions do they exhibit? How much of glamour? From how many and from what kind of reflecting surfaces have they come to us? And are they to be interpreted directly or by contraries? The world is in process of finding out; but may have to discover, too, how explosive certain composites may be.

Let us think of a great room, filled with glowing, flashing shapes of glass, of every imaginable form and colour, beautiful and horrible, fascinating and terrifying. Some of these shapes, when we lift them, are heavy; and we then notice that these are filled with clear water. Others are light, and empty. These flashing, glowing moulds, whether filled or empty, might be likened to astral forms, and the water, which some contain, to physical matter. It might be very difficult to tell, just by looking at them, which forms were filled. But however much these might differ among themselves, in shape and size and colour, and all the rich variety of nature, the filled forms would all have one common property, of which we could be sure, even without looking. They

would all be such as to "hold water". That self-consistency, we may thank the High Gods, is the indispensable requisite for physical life. The physical world will fill no bottomless forms, none whose opposite sides do not join, none in which wide gaps are left.

It is fatally easy to compose fancy pictures of what we should like to have true. We can lie back in our chair, and from the angel of Rheims or a statue of St. Michael we can take the wings, and affix them, in imagination, to our own shoulders. We can see ourselves with a gleaming sword in our hand, and a Crusader's cross upon our breast,—in all, a noble picture of a soldier in the army of heaven, enlisted for the overthrow of all human ills and the heralding of a new era. But next morning, at breakfast ——? And when we lift our physical hand and feel our physical shoulder-blades, they are still of bone, and not of feathers, and their only resemblance to wings is due, not to our nobility, but to our not standing straight.

The astral plane gives us no short cut to our goal; and perhaps there is nothing in physical life for which we have deeper cause for gratitude, than for the unyielding "No" which it opposes to the astral's facile "Yes".

Every day and every moment of the day we have to deal with the forces and the pictures of the astral plane; and few things can be more important for us than to learn so to deal with them that we shall control, and not be controlled by them, and shall create such as will help and not hinder the Masters' work and our own growth and sanity. But this control is not, and cannot be, exercised from within the plane, but only from above or below it,—from above, where our actions should have their origin, through our adherence to those spiritual and ethical principles which, as we saw, reach down into the astral dynamics; and from below, in the physical world, from which the results of our acts are reflected, by paying more heed to order and punctuality and finish in our work, making it better and more faithful. As *The Voice of the Silence* warns us, our business with the astral plane is to pass through it to what lies beyond, not to linger or wander in it; and no student of Theosophy can afford to ignore this warning.

H. B. Mitchell.

The world is a mirror of infinite beauty, yet no man sees it. It is a Temple of Majesty, yet no man regards it. It is a region of Light and Peace, did not men disquiet it. It is the Paradise of God.—Thomas Traherne.

REFLECTING ON A NEIGHBOUR

FROM the base of the cliff, a thousand feet below, the water stretches away, vast, unruffled, "an everywhere of silver", to its far-distant blending with opalescent sky. Daisies carpet the ground about me—not here and there a clump, seeking, unwelcome, to gain a doubtful foothold, but a far-flung glory of them, petal to petal, till the fields are white with bloom, and a white in which all the rainbow tints seem delicately veiled. For hours we have driven through them, alternating here and there with a field equally brimful of buttercups, or the paler yellow of wild mustard, reflecting back the sun's rays in a mantle of dazzling brightness. Behind me the spruce forest rises sharply,—the front ranks of an inland wilderness known only to the hunter or the woodsman. In the stillness of the late afternoon, the slender, pointed trees seem standing at attention, in hushed expectancy,—perhaps awaiting, like sentinels, that change of angel guardians which the poet tells us comes at close of day.

It is a land suggestive of permanence, this little corner of French Canada. The St. Lawrence is one of the most ancient of rivers, and the massive promontories at its mouth, their rock cliffs stained purple and green and deep red, have battled the ocean surges since the beginnings of time. As the sun sinks toward the far horizon, its light changing slowly through faint pink to a deep rose glow that fills the vast depths of space till it seems almost palpable, one has a sense of the long æons through which that majesty has been reflected back in exactly the same way by the green-clad hills with their wine-coloured soil and their unexpected misty waterfalls. Doubtless even the attenuated heron standing in the shallows (or at any rate innumerable past incarnations of him), has always meditated on one leg in just that way, as he waited for the receding tide to uncover a bit of sand.

How the bigness of Nature dwarfs the concerns of our little selfhood! Momentarily at least, the struggle of life, the baffling obstacles, the blows which seem so crushing, are seen for what they really are—little graded lessons set a child; each requiring all his powers; each developing in him new powers (if he wills it so) with which to meet the next bigger task, one step nearer to the measure of a man. Our own natures, too, are so much more spacious than we realize. So much of our life is spent in two small lower rooms, drably furnished, —one with our interests, our pleasures, likes and ambitions, the other with our concerns, worries, dislikes and difficulties. While, if we will but learn the way we can step out and up into spacious apartments, and galleries and terraces of rare delight and inimitable prospect. But—

> His table's spread too high for us
> Unless we dine on tip-toe.

Along the water's edge, by the road linking the scattered fringe of fisher hamlets, a bullock cart plods slowly homeward, mute evidence that life as well as landscape here is little touched by time. It was on these shores, four centuries ago, that a handful of sailors from St. Malo landed, and set up "a faire high Cross of the height of thirty foote . . . in the middest whereof we hanged up a Shield with three Floure de Luces in it, and in the top was carved in the wood with Anticke letters this posie, Vive le Roy de France." There is constant reminder of that event to-day, for an anniversary celebrated in recent years, decorated the highways with the old emblem of the blue shield with its white fleur de lys. The "posie" to the French King is gone, and in its stead are inscriptions to the honour of Jacques Cartier, the Master Pilot who then claimed the land for France. Fisher folk from the Norman and Breton coasts were the first to come, as many as twelve hundred tiny craft at a time, returning to their native land at the end of each season's catch. Gradually they took root and stayed on, joined at a later date by men from the islands of Jersey and Guernsey. Fishermen they were in those days and fishermen they are to-day. And you who think of fishing as merely a matter of dropping a line and drawing in a wriggling victim, have much to learn. It is an art, and every detail of it, even to the way the cod is split and the arrangement of the beach on which the drying racks or flakes are placed—all is done to-day as it was done long-ago.

Those who know well the French peasant and his ways would doubtless discover many another point at which manners and customs, qualities and characteristics have seen but little change as the centuries passed. Even to the uninitiated there are suggestions of it, especially, perhaps, among the old people: the little old woman beside her antiquated, out-door, clay oven; or the old men bending over their nets. It is said that as recently as fifty years or so ago, there were old men and women in remote parts of the province who would greet a stranger with an inquiry as to the King of France. The characteristic traits of a people are elusive, intangible,—the glance of an eye, a certain air of self-respecting independence, a quick responsiveness, a cheerful contentment with small things. You see it in the family who pour unexpectedly from a lonely cabin when your car is in difficulty; at first merely round-eyed with interest, but quick to understand the need, instant in their response, their pleasure in finding their language understood almost equal to their delight in the well-earned pourboire. Or again the line of men enjoying their ease across the verandah of the little native inn: idlers? by no means!—they are the entire man-power of the hamlet, congregated to lend the innkeeper voluble support in answering your question, and then to wave you a gay farewell. You find many evidences of it, of a Sunday morning, when the entire countryside drives to Mass, a queue of ten or a dozen ancient, high-wheeled buggies, jogging along the wine-coloured road toward each little town,—the horses built for dignified proceeding rather than for speed. Perched on their high seats, Jeanne and Jacques drive by twos, as they have done since the world began, in stiff Sunday-best, demurely erect, and shyly happy (proof in itself of their remoteness from our day). Next come the elders, father and mother—and over their shoulders,

so many little pairs of brown eyes, peeping pleasantly, that one marvels as to what legerdemain squeezed their small owners into so minute a space, and what prevents their spilling over with each jerk of the buggy.

By contrast, the natives of our New Jersey pine belt suggest themselves, with their look of starved ignorance and stony indifference—or the natives of some of our isolated mountain districts where the stranger meets nothing but surliness or open hostility. These people of "New France" are equally shut off from the world, it would seem, perhaps equally acquainted with toil and poverty, yet they are alert and alive, their eyes telling of interests and pleasures, contentment and good will. Another evidence of a national trait living on, one may say in explanation; it is evidently a difference in animating power, a difference in the springs from which they draw sustenance.

Perhaps there is further explanation of it in the frequent reminders of the invisible world, with which they surround themselves. In the early days, Cartier, Champlain and many another of the pioneers planted the cross in places of prominence (an island promontory, a mountain top), and to-day, like seed carried by the wind, it has come to bloom in unexpected spots, wherever Canada is French,—in the calvaires, the wayside shrines. What treasure there might be in a pilgrimage to these shrines, if the story of each could be known. This little simple cross, with the well-tended bed of gay flowers at its base—was it placed there by the woman working in the nearby field, a widow's mite, perhaps? Here a dead-end road, marked by an up-to-date government with the inevitable danger signal, but above it an unusually beautiful crucifix, the figure gleaming white against a cross of black. Who placed that, and what heights or depths of experience does it perhaps commemorate? Next a busy town, its central feature a little park of flowers and shrubs, with a noble bronze figure of the Christ, hands outstretched as if in welcome, a great golden nimbus reflecting the rays of the sun. And the churches, little and big: one in particular will stand out long in my memory for its depth of stillness, its atmosphere of adoration, its sense of an immanent Presence. Who are the worshippers whose devotion draws influences so beneficent? Continual reminder of the unseen: and as one quickly realizes on returning to a land which takes its religion differently, it cannot but have its uplifting effect—

> The soul should always stand ajar,
> That if the heaven inquire,
> He will not be obliged to wait,
> Or shy of troubling her.

It would seem to be only in occasional and remote spots that French traits are outwardly and noticeably present; yet those who know, claim that the *spirit* of France lives on throughout French Canada. The Canadian miracle, more than one writer has called it, this fact that in spite of change of rule, the lapse of years, and their affiliation with a nation having different customs and characteristics and faith,—the continued imprint of France lives on to-day in these people as a strong force. It has been claimed that it is no accident of nature, but a willed thing: that when they changed their allegiance, as necessity re-

quired, they firmly resolved not to change in essence. "They were animated by that will to live which manifests itself in a people as in an individual, by the tendency to persist in its own being, that is to say to remain that which it is, or rather to develop in its own direction, conformably to its nature and to its tradition." Certain among their leaders to-day are making every effort to foster that spirit, to develop pride in the past, to encourage the use and the perfecting of their own tongue, and to arouse or to strengthen desire for a more distinctively French future.

Miracle it may be, and yet in a sense it is only fitting and natural, because of what went into the making of French Canada. There is profound meaning in that old story of the great Chinese bell, which could not be cast with a perfect tone until the bell founder's daughter threw herself into the molten metal, a willing human sacrifice. Human sacrifice, often unseen and unsung, is exacted for every human achievement—one might say it is the measure of the achievement, on one plane or another. Such sacrifice as that of the early pioneers could not fail to have its effect. Foremost in this connection, perhaps, are the Jesuit Fathers who came ready for martyrdom, and whose utter self-immolation in their lonely missions through the wilderness, must have contributed incalculably to the inner heritage of the country. But among the laymen as well were men consecrated to an ideal, animated by high courage. Yes, there were the usual number of adventurers, the usual number looking only for wealth, but certain of the leaders combined the finest qualities of the *grand seigneur* with the spirit of the ascetic and the saint,—to say nothing of the humbler colonists, every day of whose lives called for courage and endurance, and quiet heroism of the kind that brings neither fame nor fortune.

These little coves, indeed nearly every foot of ground along the river banks, could tell a tale of the dauntless courage of that long-ago time. It was on the far shore, no great distance up the river, that Champlain and his little group of settlers won a victory that was unique. A terrible winter had decimated their ranks; disease had taken its toll; their food was gone—a few ounces of peas could be rationed out daily, but nothing more except an occasional scrap begged from the Indians; fifty pounds of gunpowder still, and then not even ammunition would remain to them. Day by day, they waited in agonized suspense: death, or the longed-for ships and supplies from France, which would it be? Suddenly a ship! But it was an enemy ship, there to do battle, assuring them that succour had been cut off, and demanding surrender. And to their messenger, Champlain returned that proud answer: "Having still some corn, beans, peas and other products which make as good flour as the best wheat in the world, and knowing that to surrender our fort in the condition in which it now is would make us unworthy to appear before our king, I think that you will have a greater regard for our courage if we meet force with force than if we cravenly surrendered what is so dear to us, without first seeing what your cannon can do. Come on. We wait the moment to receive you and to disprove, if we can, any pretension you may have to put your hands on this place." The splendid gesture of a brave man—nothing more. And to the amazement both

of that man and his followers, the enemy weighed anchor and sailed down the river. It was Champlain who once used the phrase, "Avec la langue française, un cœur et un courage français."

In these waters, too, though at a later date (just after the death of Montcalm) occurred the naval engagement which placed the name of Vauquelin high in the lists of unsung heroes. Fighting against terrific odds, and realizing that his little ship was doomed, he ran her aground as near the shore as possible, hoping that some of his men might be landed to serve in later fighting. Two enemy frigates closed in, and for two hours poured a close-range cannonade into her hull. As the tide receded and she began to lean, Vauquelin, still fighting desperately, cut first the main mast and then the mizzen, sending them crashing into the water, to leave the decks level as long as possible—and climbed, himself, to nail the flag of France to the broken stump. Through great gaps in the hull, water pouring in around the last four barrels of gunpowder, effectually silenced the guns. Seizing their muskets, the men fought on till the final round of ammunition was spent. When at length all resistance ceased, a boarding party approached from the enemy frigates. Vauquelin, wounded, sat by the mainmast stump, surrounded by the dead and the living (five unwounded officers and six of the crew). His sword he tossed overboard, determined never to surrender it. Above them the flag was still flying.

"Haul down your flag", shouted the approaching officer.

"But for lack of ammunition", cried Vauquelin, "my guns would be speaking further with you. If my flag is to be lowered, it is for you to take it down!"

Such is the spirit behind these people of French Canada, and this they share with all mankind, whenever mankind wants it; for there is no restriction—nobility, honour, devotion to duty are part of the common treasure on which all men may draw. Timeless, belonging to yesterday and to-morrow as well as to-day, it lives on in the undercurrents of life, reinforcing all that is akin to it (a part of our "Daily Bread" all too often unrecognized). Indeed, in the simple lives of these people, it is easy to see an epitome of the experience of the race. Are we not all exiles from a far-off homeland, custodians of a splendid tradition, with the same open question as to the use we shall make of it, the justification we may afford? Are we not heirs of an age-old heritage on which we draw ceaselessly for our very being,—the heritage suggested in that passage from *Fragments*—

> The Soul speaketh: Out of the far past I come to you, bridging the distance you have placed between us, in the majesty of my power, in the effulgence of my glory, in the sternness of my displeasure.
>
> I am He whom you have denied and turned against; you have crucified me between two thieves. Yet am I also mighty in my compassion, and therefore turn I not away from you—Oh! reflection of myself.
>
> For though you have soiled the divine image in which you were made, preferring to herd with the animal in you rather than to walk the starry spaces of the sky; yet I, who am yourself, return again and yet again, and so for ever will return, until at last you see and follow me.
>
> J.C.

THE UNDERSTANDING OF PARTICULAR THINGS

The more we understand particular things, the more do we understand God.—SPINOZA.

TRUTH, spelled with a capital T, is a noble word, but like most abstract nouns, it is likely to suggest something very shapeless and very hazy. Truth only appears concrete and actual when we realize that we are in personal contact with it at every instant of our lives. The One Eternal Truth is made manifest through the manifold forms of particular "truths" which we can assimilate and comprehend. "The more we understand particular things, the more do we understand God." Our love and knowledge of Truth is measured by our loyal acceptance and recognition of the facts of daily experience.

From one point of view the whole of existence may be described as a conspiracy to compel us to seek and to discover things as they are. We are always being bombarded by facts. All that we have to do is to look at them. But for some inscrutable reason—because of "unwisdom" or "original sin"—mortal man dreads the sight of a fact. We have indeed cultivated self-deception so persistently that most people could not imagine life without it. Thus between ourselves and the world as it is, we have interposed a glamour, a picture of the world as we should like it to be. It is as if we looked out upon the universe through an iridescent veil or film, discolouring and refracting every ray of light which reaches us, altering real perspectives, making the beautiful seem drab and the ugly seem beautiful. Many psychiatrists argue that most of the activities of the average man are inspired by the desire to escape from realities. We fear that the diagnosis is correct. And the worst feature of the whole matter is that Karma holds us strictly responsible for the manufacture of the various "escape mechanisms" which we employ. Nature has not bombarded us with facts for countless centuries without some effect. We have learned a great many truths, in spite of ourselves, and our worst offences against Truth are committed without the excuse of ignorance.

No man can evade with impunity the obligation to seek and to obey the truths which he knows or firmly believes. When an example of evasion is crude enough, we see clearly what consequences must follow. The drunkard wrecks his home; the gambler squanders his capital. Why? Not because they know no better. They know, in their more lucid moments, that they are behaving like lunatics or worse; but they lack the courage to forsake the glamour of folly for the clear, cold atmosphere of realities. For our part, although we do not adopt the drunkard's technique as a means of numbing our sense of the Real,

our behaviour corresponds to his whenever we refuse to look at things as they are and seek refuge in dreams. "There is no Religion higher than Truth." Whatever else these words may denote, they at least mean this,—that we should reverence and contemplate facts, and act accordingly. Where there is fact, there is Truth. Our knowledge of Truth comes to us, not through wishful thinking, but through contact with what is real, and through inferences firmly based upon observation and experience.

What do we mean, when we say that an idea is true? We mean that it accurately reflects or symbolizes some fact of experience, and thus enables us to recognize or identify that fact whenever we meet it in Nature. It is by this means that we find our way, without too many disasters, in our daily meanderings through the labyrinth of physical existence. It is by this means that we distinguish oranges from apples and cows from horses. But a true idea is always an image of an experience, or a sound inference from an experience. Experience and true knowledge are one and inseparable. This is what wise men have been saying since the beginning of history. We live and grow by the assimilation of experience. Moreover, because the potential expansion of our experience is infinite, the potential expansion of our knowledge is infinite also. He who lives the life, shall know the doctrine. The wisdom of a sage is not theoretical but experimental. In the vivid phrase of the Buddha, the enlightened Arhat "sees and knows the Universe face-to-face". As Plotinus expressed the same fundamental thought: "The Higher Self knows by its power of vision, which is itself, the Eternal which is likewise itself." According to the universal testimony of the mystics, we cannot really understand a thing until we experience it, for when we experience it we become one with it: so the Divine Mind experiencing all things, is immanent in all things. He who has attained conscious union with the Divine Mind, "knows what is passing in the mind of the ant".

The mystic dwells in the same world as the rest of us. By effort and sacrifice, he has earned the advantage of being more aware of certain aspects of Being than we are; but the elements of our experience correspond to his. We cannot help realizing that the only sure knowledge is the knowledge which is lived. For example, no amount of reading or speculation could make us understand what the taste of a strawberry is like; there is only one way of knowing that taste, and that is by actually tasting a strawberry. When that immediate intuition occurs, we no longer think of ourselves as subject and of the strawberry as object, for the taster and the tasted have, in the most literal sense, become one. This is a lowly and modest experiment, but it illustrates what is meant by the identity of knowledge and experience. A truth is not known until it becomes part of our experience or corresponds to part of our experience.

We can never learn anything about Nature or about ourselves, unless we face facts. Without doubt some facts are more important than others. Facts may be beautiful or ugly, good or evil, great or small. Moreover a thing may be "real" in one sense and not in another. The great art of discernment between the Real and the unreal is, in one aspect, the technique of distinguishing just how seriously we should take any particular item of consciousness. As *Light on the*

Path points out, our knowledge of physical matter, as a result of æons of experience, has become intuitive. We distinguish without effort between physical things and psychic or mental images. In our waking hours, we assume without argument that a mountain, which we see with our bodily eyes, is one thing; that the mountain, which we see in our mind's eye, is another. A physical mountain is a concrete and impersonal fact; it continues to exist, regardless of our convenience or inconvenience. A psychic mountain is a "fact" also, in the sense that it is a datum of consciousness; but it is tenuous and evanescent: it is not a "self-existent" entity, like a physical mountain. There is no need of labouring the point. Anyone who confuses material objects with the furniture of his mind is obviously a candidate for an asylum.

It is painfully apparent, however, that when we are concerned with facts of a slightly more subtile order, we do not always or easily make an instinctive distinction between our little private worlds of fantasy, and the great and common world. There is the League of Nations, for example. The League, as an "ideal", is a confused dream about some sort of world where all nations are brothers. On the physical plane, in this cycle of history, no such brotherhood exists or can exist, partly because all the great nations are more or less self-seeking and some are positively evil; partly because the vast majority of nations have only the most shadowy kind of existence. Most nations are geographical designations, and little else; and a brotherhood of geographical designations does not make sense. Thus as a physical entity the League of Nations has the status of a nebulous debating society which costs in time and money and exasperation far more than it is worth. When we pretend that it is as real as we should like it to be, we are deliberately misusing our imagination. We substitute a glamour for a fact. We try to escape from reality. We refuse to look at things as they are.

As Woodrow Wilson and others failed to discern between their dreams of international brotherhood and the state of the world as it is, so the average human being constantly makes trouble for himself and his fellows, by confusing that which he pretends to be with that which he actually is. The "elementals" which make up his "personality" and populate the field of his habitual consciousness, are as disunited and as shadowy as the bulk of the world's nations. However, he persists in the delusion that this inorganic aggregate of dreams and moods and passions is a united "self" which commands consideration and esteem from God and humanity.

An immediate problem for everyone is, therefore, to separate actuality from illusion, truth from fancy, in our relations with our own natures. As the Buddhist sage remarked, we must learn that our little pictures of ourselves are neither more nor less real than a "rabbit with horns". Horned rabbits have no existence beyond the boundaries of our alleged minds. Their "presence" is apparent only to the dreamer who invents them. By a blessed dispensation, the rest of us are not obliged to participate in his "vision". So it is that no mortal man sees his personality as others see it. He is, indeed, like a rabbit dreaming that he is a fox, and always suffering from lacerated feelings because

his companions continue to treat him like a rabbit. The thing which he fancies himself to be is *not* a fact in Nature.

Nevertheless, it is the purpose of each human soul to become real, to become a fact in Nature, a fact more concrete and lasting than anything in the physical world. Let us dive briefly into very deep waters, in order to examine a little what is meant by a "fact in Nature". The great mystics have testified, with one voice, from time immemorial, that there is, in the last analysis, one supreme Fact in Nature, and that Fact is Nature itself, the One Reality, the Divine Essence, the Eternal Be-ness, which underlies and makes possible all forms and all beings. This ineffable *substance* has been remotely symbolized by many names. Whatever we may presume to call it, it is pre-eminently the "World of Truth". This one supreme Fact, as a "thing in itself", is absolutely beyond the comprehension of the human intellect, although our highest power of intellection is the certain intuition that the "World of Truth" is the only thing that really *is* or can be. According to the mystical tradition, it is approached and felt, not by meditation upon its Absoluteness, which can only appear to us as an infinite vacuum, but by seeking the gleam of the Real, the purpose of Divine Nature, within every experience, within every event, within our own hearts. As Pascal said, repeating an ancient aphorism of the Mysteries, "God is a circle whose circumference is nowhere and whose centre is everywhere." The plenitude of Divine Nature is present everywhere, potentially if not actually. Existence on any other terms is impossible. The "World of Truth" is reflected, however infinitesimally and confusedly, in the humblest detail of existence. Even the most obscure iota of life partakes, in its own degree, of the nature of the Real.

Obviously, the degrees of the manifestation of the Real in the world vary infinitely. "The Breath becomes a stone; the stone becomes a plant; the plant becomes an animal; the animal becomes a man; the man becomes a god." Even the dimmest dream-image has a certain reality on its own plane; there is the much greater reality of a physical fact; there is the incomparably greater reality of the inner or transcendental fact, the essence, the Idea—as Plato called it—which the outer form mirrors more or less adequately or, too often, perverts. It is of the utmost importance that our vision of physical facts should be clear and distinct; but let us not make the mistake of the typical man of science who conceives of the physical as the one and only reality. The Universe is a Great Deep; we have not begun to fathom the true "waters of space". Astronomy, chemistry, zoology and the rest have only deciphered a few words in a sentence of a chapter of one of the numberless volumes of the Book of Nature. According to occult science, there is not one point of space where some form of life and consciousness is not present. Space is crowded with beings, with *devas* and angels and archangels, thrones, dominions, principalities and powers, nature-spirits and elementals of every description, some vaguely conceivable to us, some wholly inconceivable,—and Space has at least "seven dimensions". But there is not one point of space from which the Soul is permanently exiled. Universal experience is the inheritance of the spiritual man.

However, we need not wait until our inner senses awaken to the splendour of the inner worlds. We can begin by seeking the deepest reality that can be found within the experiences which are now available to us. A particular physical fact, for instance, is like a phrase in a sentence. Isolated from the whole to which it belongs, it is meaningless. But as a phrase can recall a sentence to memory, so a fact when clearly seen can awaken, by a sort of induction, an intuition of a larger reality of which it is a partial expression. In the degree that we thus sense the inner purpose within the outer form, we see a fact *sub specie æternitatis*, "under the form of Eternity". Artists and poets have often seen things more distinctly "under the form of Eternity" than ordinary men, and by the force of genius and ardour, have enabled others to share their vision. Does this not explain why even a simple piece of pottery, made with love by an individual artisan, has a value which can never be equalled by a machine-made imitation? In the Louvre, there is a painting by Peter Brueghel the Elder, the great Flemish artist. It is a winter scene in a farm-yard. Any traveller in northern France or Flanders passes hundreds of farms like that which Brueghel used as a model. Anyone can photograph a similar scene. But between any photograph and the painting, there is a difference corresponding to that between a plane and a solid. The winter light reflected from an old wall awakened in the artist's heart some nostalgia for the Light which "shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not". Brueghel glimpsed, if only for an instant, a commonplace aspect of physical nature "under the form of Eternity".

Doubtless this sounds vague and "subjective". But it is quite irrelevant whether others agree or not with our comments upon Brueghel's picture. The point is that everyone who is approximately human must have had some realization of an inner and superior truth and beauty to which some form of art or nature has directed his attention. We can prove the genuineness of such intuitions by continuous experiment. We should never content ourselves with the notion that we know all that there is to be known, when we have examined and analyzed the surface of an event. In the words of the Buddha, we must learn how to "look through things". Nothing can be more pertinent to our destiny than to develop the faculty of seeing things in a perspective which is more veritable, more real, than the perspectives in which we now see them. By no other means can we ever hope to gain power and peace.

We can begin anywhere. However, sooner or later, we shall have to look carefully at our own selves. What is it that we think we are? What is it that we really are, "under the form of Eternity"?

Those who have seriously set themselves the task of answering those questions have replied with extraordinary unanimity that the "self" which man fancies himself to be, is an illusion, a phantom, a "surface appearance"; that the Self which he is in Truth and Nature, is an undivided fragment of the Eternal. For example, we read in the *Theologia Germanica:*

> What did the Devil do else, or what was his going astray and his fall else, but that he claimed for himself to be also somewhat, and would have it that somewhat was his, and that somewhat was due him? This setting up of a claim, and his I and Me and Mine,

these were his going astray and his fall. And thus it is to this day. What else did Adam do but this same thing? It is said, It was because Adam ate the apple that he was lost or fell. I say, It was because of his claiming something of his own, and because of his I and Me and Mine, and the like. Had he eaten seven apples, and yet never claimed anything for his own, he would not have fallen.

"I and Me and Mine." Only he who has identified himself with the "United Spirit of Life", and who speaks as its representative, can thus express himself with wisdom and truth. How can we be brought to realize that as the superlative fact? One thing we can do at once: we can tear aside the iridescent veil which we have suspended between ourselves and realities. We must not only school ourselves to face facts, but go forth in quest of them, searching them out, ever broadening and deepening the zone of our experience. And we must do this, because the "United Spirit of Life" makes its will known to us by presenting one fact after another to our attention. "The more we understand particular things, the more do we understand God."

It is significant that the Buddha insisted so persistently upon the disciple's imminent need to augment his awareness of what is going on in the world and of what is going on within himself. He did not leave his injunctions in the abstract; he made them as concrete and as detailed as possible. A primary duty of the aspirant is to conform imagination, desire and will to the real. This theme is indeed the specific theme of one of the most famous of his sermons, "The Four Intent Contemplations".

Brethren, there is but one way open to mortals for the attainment of purity, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the abolition of misery and grief, for the acquisition of the correct rule of conduct, for the realization of Nirvana, and that is the way of the Four Intent Contemplations.

And what are the four?

Whenever, O Brethren, a disciple lives, as respects the body, observant of the body, strenuous, conscious, contemplative, and has rid himself of lust and grief; as respects sensations, observant of sensations, strenuous, conscious, contemplative, and has rid himself of lust and grief; as regards the mind, observant of the mind, strenuous, conscious, contemplative, and has rid himself of lust and grief; as respects the elements of being, observant of the elements of being, strenuous, conscious, contemplative, and has rid himself of lust and grief. . . .

For example, a disciple, in walking thoroughly comprehends his walking, and in standing thoroughly comprehends his standing, and in sitting thoroughly comprehends his sitting, and in lying down thoroughly comprehends his lying down, and in whatever state his body may be, thoroughly comprehends that state. . . .

How does a disciple, O Brethren, live as respects the mind, observant of the mind? He thoroughly comprehends to what state his mind is predisposed and how it is behaving at each instant, whether it be passionate or free from passion, full of hatred or free from hatred, infatuated or free from infatuation, intent or distracted, exalted or unexalted, concentrated or unconcentrated, free or attached. . . .

We have quoted only a few fragments of the discourse, but the lesson is manifest. The disciple must gain full control of his powers of perception and action; he must know what he is doing, and how and why he is doing it. What is his reward? Not only does he acquire facility in discernment between the real and the unreal, and between various grades of reality; he ceases also, as a result,

to imagine, to desire, to will the impossible. Moreover, he grows into the realization of truths whose existence he had hitherto surmised, but which he had been unable to imagine clearly because he had not known them by direct intuition, by contact. Such is the testimony of those who have brought mankind living proof that a knowledge more extensive and more profound than ours exists and is attainable. But how can we expect the inner senses and an inner mind to develop, until we have mastered the right use of the senses and of the mind which we already have?

"The individual soul is the Eternal", said Shankara Acharya. "From the world to the atom, all is the Eternal, the Eternal alone and secondless." Within our inmost being, there is the certainty that these words are true. All that is needed is "to bring that knowledge to consciousness in the self", displacing the fancies and delusions which usurp the place of fact and truth. To encourage ourselves to undertake that great act of purification, let us recall the doctrine of Theosophy, that the Eternal when "seen face-to-face" does not appear as an abstract and empty space. It is a *plenum*, a *pleroma*, containing the Host of Heaven, radiating wisdom and compassion and power. More immediately still, according to Theosophy, it is made manifest to us in the Great Lodge of Masters, the united brotherhood—the one true international league—of living men who have found the Truth which we seek, and who have conquered as we can conquer. Most immediately of all, the Eternal is "personified" for the individual disciple by an individual Master, his spiritual Father, from whom or through whom he receives the germ of imperishable genius, the unique spark of the Eternal, which is his true Self and the paramount fact in his life.

S.V.L.

The wise man is in his smallest actions great: the fool is in his greatest actions small.—THE TALMUD.

Wisdom is radiant and faaeth not away. . . . Her true beginning is desire of discipline; and the care for discipline is love of her.—WISDOM OF SOLOMON, VI. 12, 17.

THEOSOPHY IN SERMONS

There is one distinction in the world's geography which comes immediately to our minds when we state the different thoughts and desires of men concerning their religion. We remember how the whole world is in general divided into two hemispheres upon this matter. One half of the world, the great dim East, is mystic. Make any one of the great ideas of life distinct and clear, and immediately it seems to the Oriental to be untrue. He has an instinct which tells him that the vastest thoughts are too vast for the human mind, and that if they are made to present themselves in forms of statement which the human mind can comprehend, their nature is violated and their strength is lost.

On the other hand, the Occidental, the man of the West, demands clearness and is impatient with mystery. He insists on knowing what the eternal and infinite forces mean to his personal life, how they will make him personally happier and better, almost how they will build the house over his head, and cook the dinner on his hearth. This is the difference between the East and the West, between man on the banks of the Ganges and man on the banks of the Mississippi. Each misunderstands, distrusts, and in large degree despises the other. But the two hemispheres together, and not either one by itself, make up the total world (November 17, 1889).—PHILLIPS BROOKS, *Sermons, Vol. 6, p. 279.*

IN the volume, *Platonic Tradition in English Religious Thought*, Dean Inge says that in the Church, "there is and always has been a living tradition which constitutes the true Apostolical Succession; we may call it the Platonic tradition, a stream of spiritual vitality". Platonism being one manifestation of the ever old, ever new Wisdom Religion, it would seem natural to find theosophical truths expressed in sermons, since sermons are a medium through which much teaching is conveyed.

Theosophical truths are indeed found in a multitude of sermons, not from some particular "school" of theologians, but through century after century, in an apostolical succession of the spirit that is without distinction of conformity or creed. Many a man of the various churches has penetrated beneath the surface of theological rust, and touched the dynamic centre of truth. In consequence, spiritual laws radiating from that centre—organic and universal laws—have vitalized his sermons which, after the passage of a hundred, or two hundred, or three hundred years, contain lessons quite pertinent to the present day. Thus, Dr. Robert Wilberforce writes: "Union with Christ is not merely imitative, visionary, metaphorical; it is not only that we feel in our minds as though we put ourselves under His guidance and took part with Him; but there is a real action of Christ's purified, upon our impure, humanity. Hence is He styled that new Adam, from whom we have as true descent as from our natural parent. . . . Thus may men recover that image of God, in which our first parent was created. The very purpose of the Gospel covenant was to give it

back. The New Man was to bestow in its perfection whatsoever the first Adam had lost. As real as our union with the one, must be our communion with the other. . . . By union we mean not the compacting of an external framework, but the real diffusion of a spiritual presence" (*Sermons on the New Birth*, pp. 15 ff.).

It is true that those sermons do not use a theosophical vocabulary, but it is as easy to perceive their meaning as to translate from English to French. Specific theosophical tenets are occasionally referred to, directly or indirectly, but such reference is exceptional. Thus John Donne (1573-1631) refers to Reincarnation because in Donne's Renaissance environment, Platonism had given some currency to the idea. Further, Donne's wife was of the family of Sir Thomas More, and More had translated the writings of the celebrated Italian Platonist, Mirandola. Early in the present century, Dr. Basil Wilberforce (1841-1916), Archdeacon of Westminster, preached, in the Abbey, upon Theosophy and upon Reincarnation. Those sermons show an acquaintance, but very imperfect, with theosophical teachings, and express some appreciation. He writes:

"The one attraction in this system, and it is a great attraction, lies in the assurance it professes to give to man of his essential union with the source of his own and of universal life, and its recognition of one all-pervading substance, one all-controlling force in the universe; and the narrow, limited, unphilosophic conception of conventional Christianity is the secret of the power of Theosophy."

"Ancient Theosophy has found different expression in different religions and philosophies down the ages, and nowhere in so clear a realization as in the ancient Upanishads of India, which have powerfully taught the Eternal oneness of the human and Divine nature, and the essential unity of the human soul with the Universal Soul" (Sermon on Theosophy, in *The Hope that is in me*, p. 236). Archdeacon Wilberforce was, however, a man of devotion and spiritual insight. After condemning Theosophy, in those particular sermons, in many others he eloquently interprets Christianity as an evolution of the spirit, and his presentation rings like the true gold of Theosophy.

"As with the atoms of the planet, so with every conceivable department of creaturely life, 'the voice of the Lord' is pleading with the instinct implanted in the earthly to evolve into the heavenly; to nations, governments, communities, social movements, moral reforms; to art, science, literature, religion, sanitation, just as to the cosmic dust, from which all things came, the unceasing command from the Eternal righteousness is, 'O earth, earth, earth, hear the voice of the Lord'; develop, exercise, unfold, perfect, purify, Christianize. It is the same 'voice of the Lord', the same Word of the Father, the same pressure from without stimulating the power within, which kindles into evolution dust life, earth life, plant life, animal life, man life, spirit life" (Sermon on "Cosmic Consciousness", in *Power with God*, p. 133).

Bishop Phillips Brooks used the text: "With whatsoever measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again", to prove that there is a *universal* "Law of Return". "The Law of Return"! That is not a misleading definition, is it, of the Law of Karma? Bishop Brooks wrote:

"It is a law of vast extent and wonderful exactness. The world is far more orderly than we believe; a deeper and truer justice runs through it than we imagine. We all go about calling ourselves victims, discoursing on the cruel world, and wondering that it should treat us so, when really we are only meeting the rebound of our own lives. What we have been to things about us, has made it necessary that they should be this to us. As we have given ourselves to them, so they have given themselves to us. This is the law I want to trace with you, only begging you again to keep your minds clear of any materialism which would think that in mere earth itself resides this power of just and discriminating reply. It is as we and all things exist together in the great embracing and pervading element of God, that all things give themselves to us as we give ourselves to them. So all the phenomena of life are at the same time divine judgments if we are only wise enough to read them" (*Sermons*, Vol. 3, p. 268). Such reference or mention as that made by Donne, Wilberforce, and Brooks very seldom occurs. As a rule, the sermons are confined to Christian topics, and use Christian vocabulary.

Thus, setting forth no novel or sensational doctrine, but strictly Christian teaching, the preachers of these sermons—a long line of them—incurred little or no suspicion of heresy, but continued "in good standing" with their authorities. In England, the friends with whom Thomas Arnold, Pusey, and Jowett associated themselves bandied the word "heresy" back and forth, but "party politics" had much to do with their unfortunate disagreements. In New England, Horace Bushnell's interpretation of Christianity as an expression of universal truth and law, stirred questions among people schooled to sermons that were designed to reach the intellect by a logical sequence of dogma. Dr. Bushnell's parish heartily approved his views, and wished him to be unhampered in his expression; by withdrawing from the association of Congregational Churches, and continuing as an independent parish, it forestalled any ecclesiastical inquiry. Around Phillips Brooks, also, there were heard whispers about a "creedless" bishop. His dynamic preaching of universal, spiritual laws was beyond the understanding of those who were accustomed only to dogma, rigid as in death. The envy of "parties", too small to contain his greatness, was responsible, perhaps, for those whispers.

Mystical sermons have been persistent. Those who thirsted for instruction in the inner life could always find it, no matter how dead the age might seem. The continuity of the stream through the period following the Reformation is narrated in a valuable book that has a misleading title, Dr. John Tulloch's *Rational Thought in England in the XVIIth Century*. The word, "rational" in that title really means "mystical". After the seventeenth century, preacher after preacher handed on the torch. A great ecclesiastic who followed chronologically the group of Cambridge Platonists was William Beveridge, chaplain to the royal family (William and Mary), and Bishop of St. Asaph. Dr. Beveridge died in 1708, and his sermons were published a few years later. Those sermons were closely studied by the Wesley brothers, John and Charles, during student days at Oxford. Later, when the Wesleys began to preach, it was no

new doctrine that they put forth, but such teaching as Dr. Beveridge had delivered, year after year, in royal chapels and cathedrals. John Wesley took to the demonstrative crowd of the streets and mines what the bishop had preached to less emotional congregations.

After John Wesley's death in 1791, there followed a dreary period of religious deadness that has been many times described, by Newman and Ruskin among others. The childhood and youth of Carlyle lay in that period. It is said to be reflected in the novels of Jane Austen, whose clerical personages are untouched by religion. Yet even in that period, the stream of true religion still flowed. Newman mentions Dr. Daniel Wilson (1778-1858), who became Bishop of Calcutta, and says the Oxford students listened with wide open ears to his forceful sermons. The following passages from a sermon on the Character of Christ fairly represent Dr. Wilson.

"Nothing is so rare or so difficult as the combination of the various duties and graces which constitute the Christian character; and yet it is in this combination that the evidence of a real change of heart principally lies. There are some dispositions of mind and some duties which are, from our natural temperament, our age, our station, and our circumstances, so natural and easy to us, as scarcely to be deemed distinct marks of our regeneration. In fact they are often little more than apparent virtues; they vanish with every change of circumstances, they give way to selfish and excessive passions, and even decline into the positive correspondent vices, unless they are checked and balanced by the opposite, and to us more difficult, graces and duties, which should accompany and guard them.

"Now, in our divine Master, there was the most perfect combination of every excellency. He reconciled the most remote and discordant qualities. When asserting his authority and summoning all the world to his tribunal, he spake with an inexpressible dignity and majesty: on other occasions he was the most humble and meek of men. Even under all his sufferings and ignominy, there shone forth a superiority and greatness of mind, which confounded his enemies. He displayed also the utmost tenderness and mildness, and yet the most unyielding boldness and fortitude. His meekness did not degenerate into apathy. Nor did his boldness become fierce and ungovernable. There was in him that union of opposite virtues, which constitutes a perfect character: whilst others have virtues of one description only. All was in order, all in proportion, all from principle, all in harmony.

"He combined, in like manner, the most outgoing compassion to sinners with the greatest hatred of sin; the most exquisite sensibility, with a perfect command of his feelings; the purest spirituality of mind, with a consideration of all the minute wants and circumstances of his hearers; the highest love to the souls of men, with the most affectionate regard to their bodies; the most complete superiority to the world, with a respectful submission to authorities ecclesiastical and civil; an entire separation from the follies and sins of mankind, without a trait of austerity or misanthropy.

"Christians can readily follow their Master in some one branch of these graces.

We can be compassionate; but then we are so candid as to countenance sin. We can show a lively sensibility of affection; but then we fall under its power and are subdued. We can be spiritually minded; but then we are not so willing to attend to the minor details of ordinary duty. We can express great tenderness for the bodies of men, but we leave their souls, comparatively speaking, to perish. Or we may profess a love to their souls, but we contribute sparingly and reluctantly to relieve the pains and sufferings of our common nature. We can express a contempt for the world; but then we at the same time fall into sin by doing it in a cynical, inconsistent, covetous, censorious, pharisaical spirit. We can defend the truth; but with the zeal of a partizan, and without sufficient respect for the persons or opinions of our adversaries.

"We lean with all our weight on one side. We think it some excuse that our inclination and turn of mind has a peculiar bias; whereas we should study our Lord's character in order expressly to copy those parts of it to which our natural dispositions would least attract us. In this way we shall unite, as our Lord did, all the milder virtues with all the more firm and intrepid ones; we shall display the graces of the contemplative life with the efforts of the active,—a union which may be said to comprise the whole compass of our obedience to God" (*Sermons*, p. 390 ff.).

Nor was it the stream of sermons only that was guided; there were also devotional books. A Scotch rector, Henry Scougal (1650-1678), published before his early death, a short treatise on *The Life of God in the Soul of Man*. The argument of this mystical writing is that "religion is a union of the soul with God, a real participation of the divine nature, the very image of God drawn upon the soul, or in the apostle's phrase, 'It is Christ formed within us'." That little book made an impression upon its generation, and a copy of it was taken by an emigrant to Virginia, where it fell into the hands of the local vicar. Recognizing its unusual value, the vicar prevailed upon Benjamin Franklin to reprint it in 1799. A copy of the Philadelphia reprint came into the possession of the youthful Emerson, whose marginal notations testify to its value to him.

Mention has been made of Dr. William Beveridge (1637-1708), Bishop of St. Asaph. After Keble's memorable sermon in 1833 had started a revival of religion at Oxford, the six volumes of Bishop Beveridge's sermons were republished. Pusey, Newman, and Keble looked with pride and gratitude to Beveridge as one of their vital links with the past. He was a spiritual ancestor who had passed on the old inner interpretation of religion which the materialist Liberalism of 1830 was threatening to extinguish. In his own day, Beveridge was called "the great restorer and reviver of primitive piety". Extracts from a sermon on the text, "Set your affections on things above", will give an indication of the depth and breadth of his preaching, and of the saturation of his mind with the ideas of Platonism (*Sermons*, Vol. 6, p. 169 ff.).

"Man being a perfect microcosm, composed of two essential parts, a soul and a body, whereof the one was taken from the superior, and the other from this inferior world: hence it necessarily follows, that although both these parts do equally concur unto the constitution of a man, yet that which is of the purest

nature, and most noble extract, must needs be designed at first to govern and rule the whole, and by consequence that man, according to his constitution, was always to live and act according to the dictates and commands of his rational soul, and not according to the inclinations of his sensitive part: but by the degeneracy of our first parents, in hearkening to their senses rather than to their reason, our souls have ever since been subject to the tyranny of our rebellious senses: and that part which at first was placed at the stern, to sway and order the whole man, according to those principles of reason which were infused into it upon that account, is now debased so low as to become a slave to every one of these senses which it was made to govern. And therefore, our great care in this world should be to restore our souls to their throne and kingdom again; so that our flesh may not any longer usurp any power and dominion over them, as heretofore it hath done, and still will do, unless we keep a strict eye upon it.

"Now, as it was in the first Adam that our souls lost their power, though not their right, to govern, so it is only by the second that they can ever recover it again. But our comfort is, that as in Adam we fell from Heaven to earth, so in Christ we rose again from earth to Heaven; as the Apostle intimates in the foregoing verse, 'If ye then be risen with Christ'. For when Christ rose, all those that by a true faith were united to Him, could not but rise with Him; yea, so rise with Him in our souls, as to live with Him in Heaven, even whilst our bodies are upon the earth. . . .

"So although we are in the world, and converse with the things of it, yet we are not to concern ourselves about them, any further than to do our duty in the station wherein God hath set us, and prepare ourselves as well as we can for our going into the other world, our hearts hanging loose and indifferent as to all things here below, being fixed only upon God, and those glories that are above. . . .

"For tell me seriously, you that expect ere long to bathe yourselves in those rivers of pleasure which are at God's right hand for evermore, can it become you to drown yourselves in a deluge of carnal pleasures and sensual delights? You that have such plenty of bread and heavenly manna in your Father's house, is it not below you to feed like the prodigal upon husks, with the swine of this world? You that hope ere long to trample upon the moon, and to be advanced above the stars themselves, is it fitting for you to lie under a clod of earth? In a word: You that expect ere long to be invested with all the bliss and happiness that a creature is capable of, is it a comely thing for you in the meanwhile to spend your time in running after shadows, and in playing with childish gewgaws? in raking in the dirt, or treading in the mire? Is this proper work for the heirs of Heaven to be employed in? . . .

"For the things of this world have no other existence but in our thoughts and fancies: abstract but the imagination, and they presently vanish and disappear; so that you may easily wink the greatest beauty into blackness and deformity, earth's greatest light into darkness and obscurity. Think gold dirt, and it is so: think the pomp and grandeur of this transient world vanity, and it is so. And can such things, or rather nothings, which have no other existence but

only in the roving fancies of deluded mortals; can they, I say, ever satisfy an immortal soul? . . .

"You have an expression in Job, 'Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?' What is here meant by treasures of snow? St. Gregory tells you, the 'treasures of snow are worldly riches, which men take a great deal of care and pains to gather together, as children do snow, with no small hazard of their lives; and having rolled it together into heaps, and fashioned them into the shapes of horses, or giants, and towers, they begin to fancy use, and power and safety in them: but whilst they are mightily applauding and pleasing themselves in what they have gotten, there comes a shower and washeth it all away, leaving nothing in the room of it but dirt and mire. And this is all they get for what they have done, even to be vexed and troubled for the loss of what they had got'. . . .

"Nay, the things of this world are so far from making us happy, that we can never be completely happy, until we leave them. For, where can you expect to be happy, but in Heaven? But in Heaven, although you will have glory in its lustre, happiness in its perfection, yet not one dram of any earthly enjoyment. There is infinite light, and yet neither sun nor moon; there are glorious robes, and yet neither silks nor satins: there are rivers of pleasures, and yet neither wine nor water: there are most delicate banquets, feasts of fat things, and yet neither meat nor drink; there are large possessions, and yet neither house nor land: there is most ravishing beauty, and yet neither red nor white: there are rich treasures indeed, and yet neither gold nor silver. In one word; there is all of Heaven, and yet nothing at all of earth: so little of happiness is couched under this clod of earth, that it keeps us from it, rather than helps us to it.

"And then, as the things on earth cannot make us happy themselves, so neither can they conduce to our being made so. For who ever yet could swim to Heaven in a deluge of carnal pleasures, or was blown thither by the breath of popular air? Whom did you ever hear of, that purchased an inheritance in the land of Canaan out of his revenues in this wilderness? or transported his goods from this city into that which is above, so as to exchange them there for crowns of glory, and sceptres of eternal righteousness? If this was feasible, then I should not wonder that men are so eager for the world, so covetous for the greatness of it. But do not deceive yourselves, you are never the nearer Heaven for standing higher upon earth; nor in more likelihood to be rich to eternity, because you are so in time. . . .

"From whence you cannot but conclude, the world, and all the glory of it, to be but a mere piece of pageantry that is still passing away from one to another, and presently is out of sight: all things upon earth being in continual motion, constant in nothing but inconstancy. . . .

"There are all our brethren, the Saints of the living God; yea, our Elder Brother Himself, even Jesus Christ, Who is called 'the First-born among many brethren'; for thither it was that He ascended when He left these lower regions of the world: 'I ascend', saith He, 'unto My Father and your Father; and to

My God and your God'. . . . There are the ancient Patriarchs, Prophets and Apostles: there are all Martyrs and Saints of God, even all that ever lived and died in the faith of Christ, they are now in Heaven, with one heart and voice singing forth the praises of the Most High God, and of the Lamb that sitteth upon the throne for evermore. . . . These and ten thousand times ten thousand more, are now in Heaven, there solacing themselves in the enjoyment of the chiefest good, whilst we, their younger brethren, not being yet fully come to age, are still in this lower world, grappling with its lusts, and striving against the temptations of it. But, howsoever, though our Father Which is in Heaven doth not yet see good to admit us into that blessed society 'of the spirits of just men made perfect', not being as yet fitted and qualified sufficiently for it; yet it is His will and pleasure that our hearts be amongst them, although our persons cannot; and that we still be thinking of them, and longing to come unto them, and to be made partakers with them of their celestial glories. In short, our affections should be with them in Heaven, even whilst our bodies are upon the earth, so as to be every moment preparing ourselves for that blessed time when we shall bid adieu to all things upon earth, and go up to take possession of our inheritance in Heaven. . . .

"Whilst others are busying themselves about the impertinences of this transient life, the soul that is truly pious employs its thoughts and studies about the happiness of Heaven, and the way that leads unto it; his body may be with his friends below, but his head and his heart are with his God above. . . .

"For which end it is necessary that you often retire from the cares and bustles of this tumultuous world, and bid your earthly thoughts farewell, commanding them to stay below, while your aspiring souls go up to take a view of what is above; where, having fixed yourselves amongst the choir of Saints and Angels, cast your rolling eyes about, and take an exact survey of the land of Canaan that flows with milk and honey. Look well that you cannot but behold such transcendent light and glory, that your eyes will be dazzled, and your hearts astonished at it. And if you do but listen with an attentive and believing ear, you cannot but hear such melodious music and celestial concert, as will be sure to ravish and transport your spirits beyond themselves. And do but rightly weigh and consider what is there, and you will find that there is not only the blessed company of the spirits of just men made perfect, together with Angels, Archangels, Cherubims, and Seraphims, with the rest of the celestial hierarchy, but there is Christ and God Himself; Whom to know, is the only wisdom: Whom to serve, is the only freedom; and Whom to enjoy, is the only happiness that any creature is capable of. And who would not dwell in the ravishing contemplations of such rare perfections as these?"

C.C.C.

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

THE heat had been unusually trying. There was some excuse for feeble-mindedness. But the Philosopher rebelled against it. "Can you imagine anything more humiliating", he exclaimed, "than the realization that a difference of a few degrees in temperature and humidity can almost paralyze one's mental energies!"

"Why humiliating?" said the Engineer. "After all, the body and brain are instruments. What happens to a violin if exposed to the same conditions? Even a Paganini would find himself crippled. More than once recently my sympathies have gone out to the English schoolboy who got things twisted,—as I have, in other directions. You remember the story perhaps. The poor child was being examined on a cruelly hot day, and was asked what he knew of Oliver Cromwell. At first his mind was a complete blank; then slowly, very slowly, came the answer: 'He was the man who said when he was dying, "If I had served my God as I served my King, I should not be in this state now".' It was such a gallant, and such a happy effort to produce something out of nothing, that if I had been the examiner I should have been tempted to give him top marks."

We liked that story. It was invigorating, and therefore highly moral. In any case it served as an introduction, whether logical or not, to the subject which all of us had at heart: the appeal of the Convention, some four months behind us, with the inevitable question which the Student now voiced: "'Watchman, what of the night?'" No one was willing, however, to accept the implied commission, so the Recorder asked the Ancient for his personal opinion.

"I believe there was genuine response, and that the average effort of members has distinctly improved", was the answer. "In other words, so far, good, though not nearly enough. The flower has not bloomed, and never will until the desire to love and serve the Master, as a chêla alone does, becomes an obsession, or, rather, a consuming determination, obliterating all the other purposes of life. Think of a mother, obliged to leave her home during the daytime, but whose only child lies desperately ill at their home. She works that she may provide her child with food and medical care; and she works as she never worked before: but what is her motive? where is her heart? *That*, in the inner life, is the spirit that breaks through every obstacle, and that literally flies to the outstretched arms of the father who, be it remembered, saw him '*when he was yet a great way off* . . . and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.' Is there lack of the Prodigal's sense of sin? I doubt if there can be excuse for it! 'Riotous living' and waste of substance take many forms, but the realization of our infidelities and wasted opportunities, and of our long and shameful immersion in self, if deeply repented, can provide a spring-board from

which we may take the leap from this world to the other. Or is it that love is lacking?—the more basic need of the two. The cure for that has been known and taught since religious instruction began. All of you are familiar with the oft-quoted and beautiful passage from the *Bhâgavata Purâna* which bears directly on this subject; but I should like to read it, if you (turning to our host) have a copy within reach, as it is some time, I think, since it was quoted in the QUARTERLY."

The volume was promptly produced; whereupon the Ancient read aloud:

In a former Age, O Saint, I (Nârada) was born, in a past incarnation, as the son of a certain serving woman, in the service of maintainers of the Veda, and I was engaged in boyhood in attendance upon some yogîs, who desired to remain together during the rainy season. These yogîs, even if regarding everything equally, were compassionate to me, a child, who had passed beyond all fickleness, was docile, who had never held a plaything, who was willing, attentive in service, and of little speech. . . . There, day by day, I heard heart-ravishing stories of Krishna, by the favour of those yogîs who used to sing [intone] them. And so hearing these, word by word, through my reverence, my intense love arose for Him-Whose-Glory-is-Loving.

Then arose in me, who had gained a passionate longing for Him-the-Glory-of-Love, the unshaken conviction ——

"And so forth; no need to read more, because the age-old 'cure' of which I was speaking is made more than sufficiently clear. In default of yogîs chanting heart-ravishing stories of Krishna, the modern aspirant, to kindle and increase his love, should read heart-ravishing stories of the Master, should read the scriptures, or devotional books, or anything likely to increase his love for his Master; and, above all, must think and meditate upon what he reads. He must win through to the 'passionate longing' of Nârada if he would get anywhere in the real sense,—remembering always that if he will provide the wick and the oil, the attention and the desire, his Master will provide the fire."

"You are asking a great deal", lamented our visitor.

"The Master asks everything", was the reply; "and, when it comes to chêla-ship, he cannot and will not accept less. Do not forget that a Master makes himself responsible for his chêla's life and soul, not only in time but in eternity. There was nothing new in,—Let the dead bury their dead. Follow me."

"Considering the appeal of the Convention from a different angle", the Philosopher now said, "it seems to me of great significance that the T.S. as a whole was given an opportunity to adopt in some measure what always have been the purposes and obligations of its more earnest members. It was a recognition of the sincerity and devotion of the rank and file, while the response lifted the Society closer to the heart of the Movement and to the Lodge. It was a step toward indrawal in the real sense. We do not yet know what will come of it in terms of personal development, of 'flowering'; but that the general level was raised, cannot, I think, be doubted."

"I agree with you", said the Ancient. "Further, I believe that many members became convinced, as never before, that their supreme task in life, their outstanding opportunity, is to become conscious of the Master at the head of their Ray,—of his nearness to them, of his fatherhood, of his intense interest in their welfare, of his ceaseless desire to help them in all their righteous efforts,

of their own ability to please and to serve him. Some of us realized long ago that there is nothing else in life that really counts, that really matters; and that we shall not have lived in vain if, even at the eleventh hour, we may be instrumental in bringing others to the same realization. We are compelled, therefore, to be hopeful as we think of what the last Convention, and many previous Conventions, and all the work of all the years, may still bring forth. We know that the divine Gardener watches and labours with infinite care and skill; the question is whether those whom he nurtures will open their hearts and surrender their lives unreservedly to his treatment, for, unlike the plants of our gardens, *we* have free will. Plants know when a gardener loves them, and give, in their way, love for love. Men, having minds, think about it, questioning whether it can be so, and thus, for lack of simplicity, and of true perception, shrivel instead of grow. . . . In any case, it is not yet too late. *Qui vivra, verra.*"

Now the Recorder, not expecting that brains would strike sparks in such humid weather, had asked the Philosopher and the Historian to bring books with them which they had read during the summer, and which would be likely to prove of general interest. So at this point he asked the Philosopher to report.

"I have been reading all kinds of books", was the response, "but the two that I found the most significant and encouraging were: *The Gates of New Life*, by the Rev. James S. Stewart, pastor of a Presbyterian church in Edinburgh—a collection of sermons published in New York by Scribner; and *St. John of the Cross: an Introduction to his Philosophy, Theology and Spirituality*, by Father Bede Frost, of the Order of St. Benedict, published in New York by Harper.

"I read the first of these books with intense pleasure and thankfulness, for it proves that the spirit of Theosophy has had a more far-reaching influence than I should have thought possible. Imagine, say at the time of H.P.B.'s death,—imagine reading a book of Scotch Presbyterian sermons and finding in them not only religious fervour, but breadth of religious sympathy. So often, alas, as breadth increases, depth of feeling and conviction is reduced to a mere film. So often, also, books of this kind, from Protestant sources, even when they show genuine devotion to the Christian Master, and a far broader interpretation of religious dogma than would have been tolerated years ago, are ruined by sentimental humanism and by a horror of suffering which leaves no room whatever for a horror of sin. I read this book, fearing on every page to find Pacifism set up as the inevitable outcome of obedience to Christ's teaching and example. I found nothing of the sort.

"Dr. Stewart lays especial emphasis on the (theosophical) doctrine that mere acceptance of a belief is not religion; that, instead, religion is essentially *an experience*. But it will be best to let him speak in his own words. In his sermon entitled 'Hearsay or Experience', he says:

> What, in our religious life, are we founding on—mere hearsay, rumour blown down the centuries from apostolic days, other men's thoughts of Jesus caught and put in cold storage and preserved and handed out to us—is that it? Or are we founding not on that, but on this—a Christ we have spoken to and can speak to daily, face to face and heart to

heart; an experience of Jesus thrilling and throbbing and glorious because we can say of it, "This is my own, my very own"; something that has come to us not on the authority of any Church or creed, not on the authority of our forefathers, not even on the authority of all the millions of believers who have ever lived, but on the authority of God and our own souls?

"Those who call themselves Christians, he says, owe it to their Master and to themselves to find him in as real a sense as Andrew and Peter and others found him. But how? By obeying three simple maxims, is his answer. 'The first is—keep following. . . . The second rule is—keep praying. . . . Finally there is this—keep loving.'

"Under the head of 'keep following', Dr. Stewart's advice is that which has been given in the QUARTERLY, scores if not hundreds of times, though his expression of it is well worth quoting:

> Surrender your will to His moral ideal: for whatever else may be dark in your religion, this at least is clear, that the purity Jesus stands for, the honour, the manliness, the love, —all that is far more worth having than any of the allurements of the world. Get your feet on to that road, for it is down that road somewhere that Jesus is always to be found, and no one who has sought Him there has ever failed to find Him. Therefore, keep following.

"Passage after passage from almost any of these sermons could be quoted with pleasure. 'A Modern Substitute for the Gospel' might be an echo (though it certainly is not an echo) of what genuine Theosophy has preached for many years.

> A new religion has appeared on the field. A substitute for the gospel is offering itself. It is the worship, not of God, but of man. This is the most serious rival which Christianity [and Theosophy] in this generation is facing.

"That the author refers to Theosophy disparagingly is not surprising, for all he can know of it is one or more of the several varieties so widely advertized in England, and which differ from the Theosophy of H.P.B. and Judge as the Black Mass differs from the Last Supper. How far from narrow he is, however, can be inferred from this passage:

> Widen your horizons! There are others, thank God, working for Christ in totally different ways from yours or mine. There are gates into the kingdom of heaven, says Revelation, from every point of the compass. There are scores of paths up the hill of the Lord. It does not matter who does the work, as long as the work is done.

"Finally, disregarding terminology, could there be a simpler or better statement of the spiritual combat, in the theosophic sense, than this?

> . . . In every one of us at this moment there is something of self, and something of Christ. And what God wills is this, that that bit of self in me, the "ego" as we call it, the thing which says "I", "mine", "me", is progressively to contract and be superseded; while the other thing, the God principle, is to expand and grow and take control. He—the indwelling Christ—must increase; and I—the self—must decrease.

"What a thousand pities that while we, as students of Theosophy, can appreciate and profit by the sermons of Dr. Stewart, he, in spite of his liberality, and in spite of all that Theosophy could do to clarify and rationalize and elevate

his faith, has been so prejudiced by misrepresentations and perversions of the Ancient Wisdom, of the *theou sophia* of St. Paul, that it would be practically impossible for him to consider its great message with an open mind.

"This is true to an even greater extent of the author of my second choice—the study of St. John of the Cross; for he is a Roman Catholic, wedded to the Sacraments as his Church explains them, and although broad-minded in comparison with many of his fellow-churchmen, is none the less as rigid as a ramrod in matters concerning 'the Faith'. In spite of this—and always making allowance for wide difference in terminology—his closely reasoned and highly philosophical study of some four hundred pages, cannot fail to impress a student of Theosophy as remarkably akin in its spirit and conclusions to our own teachings. Even the Church of Rome has been influenced by H.P.B.'s mission to the world, though such a statement would be regarded by all Catholic expositors as preposterous—and perhaps as exacerbating.

"Listen, for instance, to this:

> It is this end, the seeing of God in a "face to face" manner, without the intervention of any creature, notion or idea, about which the whole of the Christian religion is concerned, and with which, indeed, the best minds not only of the Jewish but of the pagan world were occupied. To seek God's face, to appear before Him, "to behold the fair beauty of the Lord", "to awake up after His likeness and to be satisfied with it", to believe, with Job, "that my redeemer liveth . . . and though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another", all this Old Testament faith and desire puts to shame much of that modern, debased Christianity which reduces it to a *bourgeois* morality, treats it as an accessory to present happiness and even to success in business and national prosperity. We have seen, too, how deeply the mind of the pagan philosophers was steeped in the same belief and desire, many more examples of which might be given.

"The state of Divine Union attainable in this life, says Father Frost, interpreting St. John of the Cross, means:

> . . . The total possession of the soul by God in so Divine a manner that "while neither of them changes its being, each appears to be God", in which the flame of Divine Love which is the Holy Spirit [Buddhi active], burns within and transforms the soul, as fire transforms a log of wood into itself (*The Living Flame of Love*, I, 3). For "love unites the soul to God", and now the soul has "attained to Him according to the whole capacity of its being", so that the Divine Love, once purifying and illuminating for the burning away of all the imperfections of the soul, now so enkindles it that it is enraptured, immersed and wholly converted into Love itself, knowing nought but love, having no other exercise but love, whether in doing or suffering, in engaging in affairs temporal or spiritual, "for its work is to love, and of this work, which is love" the soul has now come to its consummation and perfection, that which is "the whole desire and aim of the soul, and that of God in all the works of the soul".

"All of which is an elaboration and elucidation of St. Paul's statement: 'I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.'

"If only these Christian theologians, philosophers, mystics, could realize that the last word on their own subjects is to be found, clearly set forth, in such 'heathen' treatises as the *Bhagavad Gîta*,—when read *in the light of Theosophy*. Krishna—the Master, or the Higher Self, or the 'light within' (for, as Judge

wrote, 'the Mahatmas and the light within are not different')—Krishna again and again reveals what is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

> Only by fullest service, perfect faith,
> And uttermost surrender am I known
> And seen, and entered into, Indian Prince!
> Who doeth all for Me; who findeth Me
> In all; adoreth always; loveth all
> Which I have made, and Me, for Love's sole end,
> That man, Arjuna! unto Me doth wend.
> . . . Nay! but once more
> Take My last word, My utmost meaning have!
> Precious thou art to Me; right well-beloved!
> Listen! I tell thee for thy comfort this.
> Give Me thy heart! adore Me! serve Me! cling
> In faith and love and reverence to Me!
> So shalt thou come to Me! I promise true,
> For thou art dear to Me!
> . . . But, if in this
> Thy faint heart fails, bring Me thy failure! . . .
> Fly to Me alone!
> Make Me thy single refuge! I will free
> Thy soul from all its sins! Be of good cheer!

"However, we must not expect too much, too soon, and can afford to be thankful meanwhile for all that is of value—and there is much—in the exclusively orthodox approach of such writers as Father Frost. There is so much in his book that is worth quoting that it is difficult to select outstanding passages; but I think this is of special interest:

"Growth in the spiritual life, he says, is an interior growth,—'a development of the "inner man" under the influence of the Divine life of grace, a growing up from spiritual childhood "unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ", the growth of a life which at every stage needs its proper treatment, food and care, just as does our physical life.'

"I was glad also to find that he emphasizes a truth which so many Protestants forget, that the Christian life in itself is 'distinct from its manifestation in practice, with which it is often confounded, as if *doing* was *being* instead of the consequence of being'".

The Recorder, fearing that some of our readers might find the atmosphere of St. John of the Cross a shade too rarefied for comfort, now turned to the Historian, asking him to give us the benefit of his summer reading. The Historian laughed. "I hope", he said, "that the benefit was greater than the little I have to say about it. To tell you the truth, all I did in preparation for this meeting, after you had asked me to make ready, was to mark a couple of passages which may provide material for those who pursue the third object of the T.S.,—'the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man'. I have seldom found anything either interesting or convincing in books or reports sponsored by specialists in psychic phenomena. Even amateur collectors, such as the late Lord Halifax, of stories and evidences of an unseen

world, leave me unimpressed. But constantly I have found in the autobiographies of soldiers, statesmen, and of those whose interest in such matters is purely incidental, the recital of perhaps just one experience which has convinced them that there are 'more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of' in their philosophy, and which would arouse the same conviction in anyone with an open mind.

"My first extract relates a case of psychic prevision, taken from *Memorials of the Military Life*, a recent book by Thomas Washington Metcalfe, published in England by Ivor Nicholson and Watson. You will notice that the author's experience is typical of many if not most purely psychic visions, inasmuch as it contains no instruction, no guidance, nor the least glimmer of spiritual enlightenment. Its value lies in the fact that it cannot be explained on any materialistic basis, and that it tends to upset the rigid conception of time and space to which the average man clings,—partly, I think, for fear of losing his sense of personal reality. The story in any case is well suited for hot-weather consumption. I will read it to you if I may.

It was then that at last I faced the problem of the future, and came to a settlement with myself. That I did this was mainly due, undoubtedly, to what may have been a borderland-dream, since perhaps I had dozed while seated huddled-up on the bollard. I don't know; but I do not think so. I am inclined to believe it an example of pre-cognition, a vision such as had occasionally been granted me before, and has been since, during moments of stress.

To leave, or not to leave the army? that was the question. I cast up the years. Looking forward a score, my age being then seven-and-twenty, one could not see that they held the prospect of much. Promotion was slow; the great war with Germany, that a minority held was bound to come, was regarded as unlikely by the best civilian minds, because of commercial and financial considerations; whatever one's other qualifications might be, the doors of the Staff College were likely to remain closed to a candidate utterly incapable of passing the simplest examination in mathematics—that was a very sore point with me, by a fortunate education something of a specialist in languages; furthermore, though keen enough on some of the details of soldiering, drill, tactics, and field-work in general, ambitious as regards superior command, there was much that irked one, and would continue to irk one for the rest of those years, if remaining, as seemed most probable, a regimental officer.

But more than that: music had always been the very breath of life to me, literature I loved almost as well; I had begun to burn with the desire for a greater freedom wherein to indulge these tastes. (As a youngster I had been trained as an organist by two very eminent masters of the instrument, but, as regards writing, had made no published venture as yet.) And I had often rather hankered after the public-schoolmaster's life, with its facilities for the blending of the arts and athletics. The army, I think, is no bad training-ground for teaching, supposing the possession of some natural gift—which I fancied one had. To this I proposed to turn, as to a crutch, being pretty certain that for a while, at least, I should forfeit the generous allowance from an outraged father, who had more than once given me his views on "Organ-grinders and creeping Ushers". In addition to the above reasons for wanting to go, there was another. I think now that it bulked more largely in my mind than I then realized. My intimate life had been dealt a shattering blow a couple of years before. Much of my joy in living had gone; I was an old man before my time, much older in spirit than I am now, for all that Fate has since then again crept under the shield to strike at the heart; I was often lonely, riding or tramping the countryside with my wretched thoughts for company, despite the kindly attempts of my brother-

officers to hearten and console. (It goes ill with a man when he screws the neck of his sense of humour.) So not unnaturally there was an impulse to quit the stage on which my little tragedy had been played.

And just before dawn silvered the sky above the sharp-cut edge of the sullen hills, there came that flash of what I call prevision. Just one electric moment, in which details stood out in a clear light, and then almost instantaneously dissolved. . . . I saw, as it were, a picture suspended half-way between me and the lead-dark background. It had a gloss, as though lit by an intense light, and was a composite design, combining portions of an interior and an exterior. Between pillars, high in its loft on a gothic screen of stone, stood an organ. The pipes were of white metal, the seventeenth-century woodwork was of an ebony richness, elaborately fretted, and carved with the date of its erection. I had never seen that organ, not even a photograph of it, that I can remember. But three years later, freed from the military life, I was to walk into a cathedral transept, and look up at and recognize that very instrument, and its date as the same. It was not showed me then, as I sat on the hard iron bollard by the waterside, that the time was to come when I should look down from my seat at that organ for many Sundays, while gunners in red and blue and infantrymen in scarlet bawled the set psalm for their service, "*The Lord is my Shepherd*".

The lower part of the picture, that to the left, disclosed a massive stone buttress and a path bounded by close-cut turf. A man came round the buttress, and smiled at me; a little elderly man, who wore a hat like a parson's, though he was not a clergyman, and a short grey beard. I had never seen him before, did not know his name, nor that he existed. Yet, three years after, I met him. We became as father and son; I honoured and respected my actual father; but this man I loved as I have loved none other. For only two years did I observe that smile which so often had in it the puckishness of a happy child's, see the hands that shook so as they poised over the manuals cease their trembling as they touched the keys. It is sixteen years since he died. But to me he is not dead. Of that I have something amounting almost to proof; though not as a dabbler in spiritualistic practice, neither by trumpet nor trance. However, that can wait: it is the military life with which I deal.

If what is designed to be must be, and I was shown a glimpse of that fact then, no doubt my determination dates from it.

"All that I said of that story is equally true of my second: it is typical of the purely psychic realm,—an experience apparently purposeless, as it explained nothing and led nowhere, though of course we do not know its effect on the man who relates it. His reaction to it, however, was eminently sensible and open-minded, as you will see. I found it in *The India We Served*, by Sir Walter Roper Lawrence, Bart., G.C.I.E., G.C.V.O., C.B. The author was at that time in charge of a District in Rajputana (Merwára). His book, which is of unusual value and interest, was published in England by Cassell and Co.

One day I experienced a curious illusion. It was in the break of the rains, and I went out in the evening by myself to shoot. The ground was familiar to me, but it was all changed. There was a large lake where I had formerly walked, and on the lake was a punt with a paddle. I got in and paddled by the high bank of the lake to a little green promontory. On it, by the edge of the lake, sat a most lovely girl. I asked her what the name of the lake was, and where her village was. But she laughed and shook her head and said nothing. I paddled on, landed on the opposite bank and walked home. I was quite well, and had no fever. I could remember every detail of the place, the dress and the face of the girl, and a few days later I went back to the lake. But there was no lake and no sign of a punt, and no one had ever seen a lake or a punt in the neighbourhood. Hallucination? I do not think so. I have seen so much in India of what we in

England would call the supernatural, that I have an open mind, and I think that if we lived with the Hindus, apart from the influence of our own people, we should soon find that in that land of enchantment there is indeed more than is dreamt of in our philosophy.

"If I am not mistaken", the Recorder remarked, "that story has appeared in the QUARTERLY before. Haven't you a third, in reserve, to take its place?"

One of our editors interrupted: "It must have been some years ago", he said, "and it will bear repetition in any case. Coming from such a source, no one could reasonably question its genuineness, and it is very striking. I hope you will include it in the 'Screen'."

"I have no third story in reserve", the Historian now said, in reply to the Recorder. "There is another book, however, of which I should like to speak, though for a totally different reason. It is called *Victorious Living*, and is by E. Stanley Jones, well known as the author of *The Christ of the Indian Road* and of other similar books. *Victorious Living* consists of a series of meditations for every day in the year, each meditation concluding with a short prayer. The subjects dealt with cover a wide range, from 'How can I find God?' to 'The Kingdom of God is Nigh'; and most of them are admirable in their simplicity and sincerity of treatment. But like another missionary, C. F. Andrews, author of *What I Owe to Christ* and of *Christ in the Silence*, who also has won a host of friends and admirers among Hindus and Moslems in India by reason of his undeniable devotion to Christ as a living Master, combined with great gifts of sympathy and an exceptionally broad outlook in some directions,—like 'Charlie' Andrews, Stanley Jones is pitifully blind as to his Master's nature in one vitally important respect; for both these men are ardent, even rabid Pacifists, which, whatever they may say or think, the Master Christ *is not*. Their attitude is so utterly illogical and lacking in common sense, that it is difficult to explain in men of their gifts. Their first-hand experience of their Master I could not question, but their ability to 'hear' (to receive from him) is distressingly limited by their preconceptions and prejudices, and, perhaps, by the excessive development of some of their virtues at the expense of others,—of feminine gentleness, it may be, at the expense of that intense virility which is so characteristic of the 'Lion of Judah' who is also the Lion of the Western world.

"Mr. Jones writes: 'There is nothing left to do but to renounce all war. And that I do. And I'll tell you why. My chief reason is that war causes men to sin.'

"Yes, it does cause some men to sin; but it causes other men to leave their sins for heights of self-sacrifice and nobility of which they would have been incapable except for the terrible demands which war makes upon them. For war is both a test and an opportunity; it turns some men into devils, others into saints. War does that which life itself does—the most peaceful of lives—but war, that fiery trial, concentrates the experience of a life-time into a few months or years, and brings to the surface whatever was latent in a man's nature, with either the best or the worst in control. War does not create evil any more than it creates good; it evokes that which already exists. As Emerson said, 'We find what we bring'.

"War, says Mr. Jones, 'stands against everything that Christ stands for. It sins against Christ. If war is right, Christ is wrong; and if Christ is right, war is wrong'. But if Mr. Jones had been a Frenchman of military age in 1914, would Christ have wished him to refuse to fight, and to leave his wife and children to the mercy of the Hun invader? If Mr. Jones lived in one of our western towns, and a gang of armed desperados began to 'shoot things up', and to kidnap women that they might hold them for ransom or worse,—would Christ wish him to stand placidly by, inactive, or to do as I hope we should do, that is, seize any weapon within reach, and try to rid the world of these devils let loose? And what is the difference between our gangsters and Germany at the present time?

"The truth is that both Mr. Jones and Mr. Andrews are thoroughly materialistic in their philosophy, in spite of their religious beliefs. They would not admit it, but their attitude toward war, and all their reasons for 'renouncing' it, prove that they regard death and suffering as the greatest of human ills. This is the essence of materialism, and therefore is as unchristian as any view of life can be. They would claim, I imagine, to be orthodox in their beliefs. In that case they must regard Christ as a member of the Trinity, and the Trinity as omnipotent; but if the death and suffering caused by war are inherently evil, why does God permit earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and other natural phenomena, at least as destructive and causing quite as much suffering as war? For these natural phenomena, *as they see it*, are not caused by man, and must be under God's control. Does not this imply, logically, that they should include God in their condemnation?

"It is strange, indeed, that men who have so much light up to a certain point, should fail to distinguish between the killing of a gangster or kidnapper in order to save a woman or child from his clutches, and the killing by the gangster of anyone who opposes his evil purpose; should fail to distinguish between a war of aggression for greed, dominion and envy, and that waged in self-defence against the invader, or on behalf of the invaded,—in other words, that they should fail to realize that it is the motive that counts. They are devoted to their Indian converts and friends; they 'renounce war': logically they should advocate the withdrawal of all British troops from the North West frontier. Are they willing to leave their Indian friends, and their own families, defenceless against the murdering, pillaging inrush of Afridis and Afghans which would follow any such withdrawal within a few hours? It is ungrateful to accept protection and to exist because of it, and then to damn the protectors, or in any case their function, as standing 'against everything that Christ stands for'. They hate war, they say. I should like to tell them something: Christ hates ingratitude.

"But my quarrel with them goes further and deeper than that, for they are grossly unfair to the Master they claim to serve. They too often drive real men away from him,—and one of his greatest needs is for real men. I came prepared for this, and I am going to read to you an extract from the biography of Sir Mortimer Durand, by Brig.-General Sir Percy Sykes. Durand, the most eminent

member in his generation (1850-1924) of the great Indian Civil Service, was a sincere Christian. This is an entry he made in his diary while still a young man:

I often think Christians dwell too little on the chivalry of Christ's nature. There is too much talk of meekness and submission. I should like to stand in the pulpit and say: "The Christ whom I preach to you was no coward's God. Never let that idea be yours. He was the God of the soldier, brave and ready and strong, gentle and courteous withal, as every true soldier must be. The man who can wield the sword does not war with the tongue. Brave and independent as none of you would be in times of danger—morally and physically brave—scornfully silent before the highest court of his nation—unflinching under pain—cool and deliberate in face of murderous mobs. Without blasphemy, a perfect ideal of a gentleman in word and thought and deed—fearless as Bayard, *sans peur et sans reproche*, pure and loving towards women as the purest always are." If only men would preach Him out boldly for what He was, there would be fewer taunts at Christianity and contempt for Christians. They strip off all the attributes for which men have an innate admiration—which He possessed albeit to a marvellous extent—and then hold up a miserable apology for a God to the eyes of their flock—and tell them to be meek and gentle and take a kicking on all possible occasions. No wonder men recoil.

"That is splendid", exclaimed the Student. "Would to heaven there were more clergymen and ministers with the understanding of Durand, a layman!"

. . . . . .

There had been an intermission of several weeks. When we next assembled, the Philosopher reminded us that the subject we had last discussed was Pacifism, and suggested that this led directly to the present international situation,—the world's immediate problem. Asked to comment, he pointed out that with events moving so rapidly, it would be futile to deal with more than certain underlying principles. "The news to-day [September 17th] is that Chamberlain has returned to London after an interview with Hitler. We know nothing, so far, of what was said. I am glad of that visit. It will give Chamberlain a chance to show the stuff he is made of, and it cannot fail to bring Hitler's purposes and methods still further into the open,—which is important, considering the illusions under which some people still labour, especially in England, where Hitler, even to-day, is said to have supporters: think of it!

"After the Great War, badly wanting peace, and as usual judging others by herself, England supposed that Germany must want peace as badly, and therefore encouraged German revival in ways that drove some of us almost to distraction. Not only this, but, as everyone knows, England, under a distressing wave of Pacifism, and blindly believing in Germany's good faith—the honest man unable to conceive that all other men are not equally honest—came to look upon her army and navy as expensive ornaments, and grudged every penny spent on their maintenance. It was not until the Abyssinian affair had shown England her helplessness, and until Hitler and Mussolini had howled threats at her, that she at last woke up to the need for self-protection. Even so, she learned nothing as to the fundamental difference between races, and Chamberlain's approach to Hitler will, I fear, show the same old weakness of guileless trust in an unscrupulous adversary. As a result, Hitler will be too much for

him, and will gain the time he needs to be entirely ready for the accomplishment of his purposes (rumour says he will be ready by September 25th). If I am correct in this general supposition—I do not mean the date, which is of no importance—the interview will have been barren of results, save to Hitler's advantage,—that is, unless Chamberlain proves himself a bigger man than I have found reason to suppose. My guess in any case would be that Hitler will 'do him up', and will use him for his own ends without Chamberlain being in the least aware of it. However, we shall see.

"The truth of course is that Hitler is a wild man, a German intoxicated by his own fiercely shouted words, mad with egotism, hopelessly irrational,—a dangerous lunatic at large, though, like so many dangerous lunatics, with a streak of cunning, of calculating foresight, which amounts almost to genius. Hitler, without doubt, is trying to get all that he wants by means of bluff, threats, terrorism—without war; but he is determined to get it even at the cost of war. And the trouble is that he wants the earth: the German people are so superior in culture, civilization, fortitude, and in every other respect, to all other peoples, that if there be any sort of a God anywhere, that God necessarily looks to the German nation, ever extending its boundaries, to bring the rest of the world under its dominion. Americans for the most part refuse to take this seriously, thinking it 'silly'. It is silly; it is worse than that, it is lunatic: but Germany, led by a lunatic who voices to perfection her own wildest desires, and who flatters her vanity and drowns her fears by hammering it into her that these wild desires are attainable,—Germany, the most easily intoxicated of nations, has accepted that as its Solar-god-given mission: *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles*. As an aim it is not new, of course; but the former German Emperor was a weakling behind his sabre-rattling, and was never entirely trusted by his people, who feel, in comparison, that Hitler, having killed so many of his former bosom friends, must be 'the real thing',—*echt deutsch*.

"Now what Hitler wants he has made sufficiently evident,—explicitly so, in many directions. He wants all the territory within reach, the inhabitants of which he regards as 'Nordic'. This includes a valuable slice of Czecho-Slovakia, the Polish Corridor, Memel, and will include Holland, and the Flemish-speaking sections of Belgium, as well as Alsace-Lorraine. Further, regardless of racial origins, he wants the oil-fields of Rumania, and the wheat-fields of Hungary and the Ukraine. He wants all the Colonies that Germany owned before the Great War. As *l'appétit vient en mangeant*, this will be only the beginning of his ever-increasing requirements; and America will soon discover that instead of being comfortably out of it, as she now imagines, the many Germans in South America are already organized to precipitate a crisis there, whenever Hitler is ready to go to their 'rescue', and to absorb as much of South American territory as seems to him expedient.

"In his eyes, and in the eyes of his followers, none of this will be wrong; it will not even be 'irregular': it will be the fulfilment of Germany's 'manifest destiny'. Unless that be understood, well-meaning but stupid people everywhere will continue to bray or bleat—as the case may be—that Germans are

kindly people who would not dream of injuring their neighbours, or of appropriating what does not belong to them. It *does* belong to them, is the sincere conviction of hypnotized Germany, and anyone who tries to stand in her way, as Dr. Dollfuss and Kurt von Schuschnigg tried to stand on behalf of Austria, —is a devil worthy of death.

"The question is, then, to what extent Chamberlain's eyes were opened to these truths as a result of his visit to Berchtesgaden. He claims to be a realist. Does he understand at last that no concession will keep Hitler quiet for longer than a brief interval; that history repeats itself, and that the payment of 'Dane gelt' in any form, merely increases the appetite of those who are in fact blackmailers? In other words, does the Prime Minister realize at last that he must be prepared to concede whatever Hitler demands, not only now but continuously, and that he must choose between that and—War? This does not mean that, if he accept war as inevitable, he ought of necessity to fight at once, but it does mean that he should consult his military advisers, who in their turn should consult their French colleagues, and thus put himself in a position to decide when and where it would be wisest to allow hostilities to begin."

The Student interrupted: "In this morning's paper", he said, "in a dispatch from Paris, it is stated that, while there is no war party in France, 'there is strong army sentiment that if there is to be war, it must be now or never.'"

"I noticed that", was the reply, "but was not convinced, thinking that newspaper correspondents are more likely to be in touch with retired Colonels and War Department clerks, than with men like General Gamelin who are in command. My point is, however, that realism demands a steady, detached facing of the facts, and action, at the right time and place, as those facts may determine. If it were not for the sentimentality of public opinion in democratic countries, the obvious thing to do would be to strike first. You do not wait for the gangster to shoot you or your friends before trying to plug him as full of holes as a second's start makes possible. Surprise, and the first blow, count for much in any sort of combat.

"It is to be hoped also that England, still playing and praying for peace (which is all to her credit), will not make the ghastly blunder of allowing Hitler to bite off one cherry at a time, until, as it were, the tree has been stripped,— first Austria, then Czecho-Slovakia, and so forth, in each case adding military strength and great manufacturing and natural resources to those which Germany already possesses, the total increase to be used finally for the conquest and enslavement of England herself. So long as Czecho-Slovakia exists with her present frontiers intact—these frontiers possessing many strategic advantages besides being well fortified—she can offer stiff resistance to German aggression, thus diverting German troops from the French, Belgian and Dutch frontiers. To weaken Czecho-Slovakia, therefore, in an effort to preserve peace, by insisting upon the surrender to Germany of the Sudeten area as the price of further British 'moral' support, would be as foolish as to stand aside altogether. England must either throw up her hands now, with full realization that this means, before long, the end of an independent England and of the British Em-

pire, or England must make up her mind to fight, superficially on behalf of a small republic in central Europe, but actually for the preservation of civilized conditions in Europe and, above all, of her own existence."

"It is a terrible situation", the Historian commented, "and a terrible Karma for England, which she has brought upon herself, and others, through her own fatuous refusal to recognize Germany's real nature and intentions,—intentions which Germany did not try to conceal, but flaunted in the eyes of the entire world. I love England, and fear that the penalty she will have to pay for her wilful blindness, and for her jealousy of French influence in Europe—the ingrained desire to preserve 'the balance of power', and to strengthen Germany with that in view—is likely to involve suffering far greater than anything she had to endure during the Great War."

"If Neville Chamberlain had been a different kind of man", the Engineer now said, "I believe the interview at Berchtesgaden might have resulted in something better than his own partial enlightenment, which seems to be all the Philosopher dares hope for. I am reminded of a recent incident in business: a relatively small manufacturing company received an order for some apparatus from a large and powerful corporation, a 'valued customer'. The apparatus was fabricated and shipped. Shortly afterwards word came that it was defective, with loud complaints from the customer's chief engineer. The Works Manager of the smaller company, having learned that the apparatus in question had been subjected to tests which he considered utterly unfair and unreasonable, arranged for an interview with this chief engineer, and at once told him what he thought of these tests. The chief engineer was furious. He jumped from his chair and, with upraised arm, shouted his anger and resentment: he was 'through' with a company which dared to criticize his, the purchaser's, methods. The Works Manager was equal to the occasion. Instead of apologizing for what he had said; instead of trying to placate this important customer, he shouted back—pointing to his opponent's vacant chair: 'When you come back to earth, we will discuss this question as engineer with engineer. Time enough after that, to consider the matter as between buyer and seller.' His force of character and fearlessness, and the sincerity of his indignation, struck the other man like a blow in the face. He subsided into his chair; discussed the subject rationally, and finally agreed to a settlement which was entirely in favour of the Works Manager's company.

"Hitler is a bully (he can be charming, I am told, when he wants to be), and the only way to handle a bully is to face him down with a force greater than his own. If, in reply to Hitler's tirade—for Hitler begins every interview with a tirade—Chamberlain had shown genuine anger, and had barked at him in the tone of a commanding officer that if he dared to touch Czecho-Slovakia 'we will wipe you and Germany off the map', it is quite possible that Hitler would have collapsed, and would have become sufficiently rational to discuss terms of settlement which would have been acceptable to Czecho-Slovakia."

"Possible, but not probable", said the Philosopher. "Do not forget that Hitler has so deeply committed himself to his programme of expansion, both

in his book, *Mein Kampf*, and in his speeches, that it would be out of the question for him to maintain his ascendancy in Germany without putting that programme into effect. Do not forget either that he is a fanatic. More than that. In a book which I have not yet had time to read, but at which I have glanced—*Insanity Fair*, by Douglas Reed—the author, who witnessed what he describes, writes of Hitler's reception in Vienna in March of this year, and of how frantically he was acclaimed by the people he had conquered. Reed then says:

> It went to his head. It intoxicated him. Endless suffering for Europe was born on this day. Though his conquest of Austria had been relatively bloodless, Hitler then tasted blood. His demeanour, as he strode about on the balcony of the old Imperial Palace with the delirious multitudes shrieking below him, his voice as he spoke to them, which was that of a man possessed with some ungovernable Berserk rage, all betokened the man who was coming to think himself a God, all-powerful, invincible, all-avenging. It was a fearful scene. . . . The Austrians, like the Germans, had been won for race-hatred, foreigner-hatred, and the lust of conquest.

"America thinks she can stand aloof. What madness! Wait until New York and Boston, Philadelphia and Washington are bombed from the air, with the ultimatum that unless our gold reserves are surrendered, the dose will be repeated indefinitely.

"Some people would think this, and much else that I have been saying, extravagant; but Hitler is extravagant; it is the brazen, the unprecedented, the monstrous that appeal to him. Would America have believed, in 1918, that in twenty years England and France would be threatened by a Germany whose military force may prove greater than theirs combined? America too will have to fight for her life, and can do so now, with allies, or can do so in a few years from now, alone, unaided, against a Germany made ten times as strong by the conquest and absorption of nations she regards as her rightful prey,—France included."

"Surely not France!" our visitor protested. "Has not Hitler said that he wishes to maintain friendly relations with France?"

"He has", was the reply; "but this is what he wrote in *Mein Kampf:*

> Not until the Germans have realized that they must engage in an active and final conflict with France, will it be possible to bring the fruitless struggle to a conclusion—on condition, however, that Germany sees in the extermination of France a means of providing her people with the necessary room for expansion.

"A copy of *Mein Kampf* is given to every newly married couple in Germany. It is the Bible of all Nazis."

"Is civilization doomed?" someone asked.

"It may be so", was the reply. "That may be the only way to insure a fresh start on a better, truer basis. It may be the only way in which the guidance of 'God-instructed men' can be made possible; for only when people are desperate, and know at last that of themselves they are helpless, will they be willing to accept the guidance of those who know, and whose desire to help, fortunately for us, is unending. One thing is sure: the fate of the world, and of America as

part of the world, now hangs in the balance. Without, there is confusion and darkness and terror; within, it is for us to maintain, each in his own heart, an immovable centre of faith and confidence in the ultimate triumph of Right. Masters *are*. That is enough."

"Yes", said our oldest Member, "and even if Europe were reduced to the desolation that followed the collapse of the Roman Empire (the fate indicated by Ferrero), out of that waste and misery would arise a fairer civilization, a nobler art, a higher and purer thought and life. Whatever betide, let us keep our faith and courage undimmed. 'God's in his heaven: All's right with the world.' Nothing that is true and beautiful can ever die. It may pass from sight with the winter's frost, but it will bloom again in added loveliness when 'spring' returns once more. We must remember what we were told,—to take 'long views'."

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. . . And the seventh child went into his closet, and kneeled upon the floor, and covered his face with his hands. And he cried aloud saying: Oh Lord, how long shall the wicked triumph! And the cloud of the Lord enveloped him, and he heard a stern voice from the cloud saying unto him: When the weakling disdains his weakness, and the coward arises from his cowardice; when he is no longer in terror for the loss of his possessions, but is in terror for the loss of his soul; when the cause of the weak and downtrodden constraineth him, and not the shouting of the oppressor; when he loves righteousness and justice for their own sakes, and not as a cloak for his self-seeking; then the Lord shall be with him, to defend and uphold him, and to save him from all his enemies. For no man ever trusted in the Lord from his heart, and was deceived. Behold, the day of trial is always the day of the Lord. Turn, therefore, ye people, turn to the Lord, and follow his ways.—The Book of the Seven Children.

PSYCHIC AND NOËTIC ACTION[1]

. . . I made man just and right,
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall,
Such I created all th' ethereal powers
And spirits, both them who stood and them who fail'd,
Truly, they stood who stood, and fell who fell . . . .
—MILTON.

. . . . The assumption that the mind is a real being, which can be acted upon by the brain, and which can act on the body through the brain, is the only one compatible with all the facts of experience.—GEORGE T. LADD, in the "ELEMENTS OF PHYSIOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY".

I

A NEW influence, a breath, a sound—"as of a rushing mighty wind"—has suddenly swept over a few Theosophical heads. An idea, vague at first, grew in time into a very definite form, and now seems to be working very busily in the minds of some of our members. It is this: if we would make converts, the few ex-occult teachings, which are destined to see the light of publicity, should be made, henceforward, *more subservient to, if not entirely at one with modern science.* It is urged that the so-called *esoteric*[2] (or *late* esoteric) cosmogony, anthropology, ethnology, geology—psychology and, foremost of all, metaphysics—having been *adapted into* making obeisance to modern (hence *materialistic*) thought, should never henceforth be allowed to contradict (not *openly*, at all events) "scientific philosophy". The latter, we suppose, means the fundamental and accepted views of the great German schools, or of Mr. Herbert Spencer and some other English stars of lesser magnitude; and not only these, but also the deductions that may be drawn from them by their more or less instructed disciples.

[1] By H. P. Blavatsky, reprinted from *Lucifer*, vol. vii, October and November, 1890.
[2] We say "so-called", because nothing of what has been given out publicly or in print can any longer be termed *esoteric.* [This, and all following footnotes are by H.P.B.]

A large undertaking this, truly; and one, moreover, in perfect conformity with the policy of the mediæval Casuists, who distorted truth and even suppressed it, if it clashed with *divine Revelation*. Useless to say that we decline the compromise. It is quite possible—nay, probable and almost unavoidable—that "the mistakes made" in the rendering of such abstruse metaphysical tenets as those contained in Eastern Occultism, "should be frequent and often important". But then all such have to be traced back to the interpreters, not to the system itself. They have to be corrected on the authority of the same Doctrine, checked by the teachings grown on the rich and steady soil of *Gupta Vidya*, not by the speculations that blossom forth to-day, to die to-morrow—on the shifting sands of modern scientific guess-work, especially in all that relates to psychology and mental phenomena. Holding to our motto, 'There is no religion higher than truth", we refuse most decidedly to pander to *physical* science. Yet, we may say this: If the so-called *exact* sciences limited their activity only to the physical realm of nature; if they concerned themselves strictly with surgery, chemistry—up to its legitimate boundaries; and with physiology—so far as the latter relates to the structure of our corporeal frame, then the Occultists would be the first to seek help in modern sciences, however many their blunders and mistakes. But once that, over-stepping material Nature, the physiologists of the modern "animalistic"[3] school pretend to meddle with, and deliver *ex cathedrâ dicta* on, the higher functions and phenomena of the mind, saying that a careful analysis brings them to a firm conviction that no more than the animal is man a *free-agent*, far less a responsible one—then the Occultist has a far greater right than the average modern "Idealist" to protest. And the Occultist asserts that no materialist—a prejudiced and one-sided witness at best—can claim any authority in the question of mental physiology, or that which is now called by him the *physiology of the soul*. No such noun can be applied to the word "soul", unless, indeed, by soul only the lower, *psychic* mind is meant, or that which develops in man (proportionally with the perfection of his brain) into *intellect*, and in the animal into a *higher* instinct. But since the great Charles Darwin taught that "our *ideas* are animal motions of the organ of sense", everything becomes possible to the modern physiologist.

Thus, to the great distress of our scientifically inclined Fellows, it is once more *Lucifer's* duty to show how far we are at logger-heads with exact science, or shall we say, how far the conclusions of that science are drifting away from truth and fact. By "science" we mean, of course, the majority of the men of science; the best minority, we are happy to say, is on our side, at least as far as free-will in man and the immateriality of the mind are concerned. The study of the "Physiology" of the Soul, of the Will in man and of his *higher Consciousness* from the standpoint of genius and its manifesting faculties, can never be

[3] "Animalism" is quite an appropriate word to use (whoever invented it) as a contrast to Mr. Tylor's term "animism", which he applied to all the "*Lower* Races" of mankind who believe the soul a distinct entity. He finds that the words *psyche, pneuma, animus, spiritus*, etc., all belong to the same cycle of superstition in "the lower stages of culture". Professor A. Bain dubbing all these distinctions, moreover, as a "plurality of souls" and a "double materialism". This is the more curious as the learned author of *Mind and Body* speaks as disparagingly of Darwin's "materialism" in *Zoonomia*, wherein the founder of modern Evolution defines the word *idea* as "contracting a motion, or configuration of the fibres which constitute the immediate organ of sense" (*Mind and Body*, p. 190, Note).

summarized into a system of general ideas represented by brief formulæ; no more than the *psychology of material nature* can have its manifold mysteries solved by the mere analysis of its physical phenomena. *There is no special organ of will*, any more than there is a *physical basis* for the activities of self-consciousness.

> If the question is pressed as to the *physical basis* for the activities of self-consciousness, no answer can be given or suggested. . . . From its very nature, that marvellous verifying *actus* of mind in which it recognizes the states as its own, can have no analogous or corresponding material substratum. It is impossible to specify any physiological process representing this unifying *actus;* it is even impossible to imagine how the description of any such process could be brought into intelligible relation with this unique mental power.[4]

Thus, the whole conclave of psycho-physiologists may be challenged to define Consciousness correctly, and they are sure to fail, because Self-consciousness belongs alone to man and proceeds from the SELF, the higher Manas. Only, whereas the psychic element (or *Kama-manas*)[5] is common to both the animal and the human being—the far higher degree of its development in the latter resting merely on the greater perfection and sensitiveness of his cerebral cells—no physiologist, not even the cleverest, will ever be able to solve the mystery of the human mind, in its highest spiritual manifestation, or in its dual aspect of the *psychic* and the *noëtic* (or the *manasic*),[6] or even to comprehend the intricacies of the former on the purely material plane—unless he knows something of, and is prepared to admit the presence of this dual element. This means that he would have to admit a lower (animal), and a higher (or divine) mind in man, or what is known in Occultism as the "personal" and the "impersonal" *Egos*. For, between the *psychic* and the *noëtic*, between the *Personality* and the *Individuality*, there exists the same abyss as between a "Jack the Ripper", and a holy Buddha. Unless the physiologist accepts all this, we say, he will ever be led into a quagmire. We intend to prove it.

As all know, the great majority of our learned "Didymi" reject the idea of free-will. Now this question is a problem that has occupied the minds of thinkers for ages; every school of thought having taken it up in turn and left it as far from solution as ever. And yet, placed as it is in the foremost ranks of philosophical quandaries, the modern "psycho-physiologists" claim in the coolest and most bumptious way to have cut the Gordian knot for ever. For them the feeling of personal free agency is an error, an illusion, "the collective hallucination of mankind". This conviction starts from the principle that no mental activity is possible without a brain, and that there can be no brain without a body. As the latter is, moreover, subject to the general laws of a material world where all is based on necessity, and where there is no spontaneity, our modern psycho-physiologist has *nolens volens* to repudiate any self-spontaneity in human action. Here we have, for instance, a Lausanne professor of physiology, A. A.

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[4] *Physiological Psychology, etc.*, p. 545, by George T. Ladd, Professor of Philosophy in Yale University.
[5] Or what the Kabalists call *Nephesh*, the "breath of life".
[6] The Sanskrit word *Manas* (Mind) is used by us in preference to the Greek *Nous* (noëtic) because the latter word having been so imperfectly understood in philosophy, suggests no definite meaning.

Herzen, to whom the claim of free-will in man appears as the most *unscientific* absurdity. Says this oracle:—

> In the boundless physical and chemical laboratory that surrounds man, organic life represents quite an unimportant group of phenomena; and amongst the latter, the place occupied by life having reached to the stage of consciousness, is so minute that it is absurd to exclude man from the sphere of action of a general law, in order to allow in him the existence of a subjective spontaneity or a free will standing outside of that law.[7]

For the Occultist who knows the difference between the psychic and the noëtic elements in man, this is pure trash, notwithstanding its sound scientific basis. For when the author puts the question—if psychic phenomena do not represent the results of an action of a molecular character, whither then does motion disappear after reaching the sensory centres?—we answer that we never denied the fact. But what has this to do with free-will? That every phenomenon in the visible Universe has its genesis in motion, is an old axiom in Occultism; nor do we doubt that the psycho-physiologist would place himself at logger-heads with the whole conclave of exact scientists were he to allow the idea that at a given moment a whole series of physical phenomena may disappear in the vacuum. Therefore, when the author of the work cited maintains that the said force does not disappear upon reaching the highest nervous centres, but that it is forthwith transformed into another series, *viz.*, that of psychic manifestations, into thought, feeling, and consciousness, just as this same psychic force when applied to produce some work of a physical (*e. g.*, muscular) character gets transformed into the latter—Occultism supports him, for it is the first to say that all psychic activity, from its lowest to its highest manifestations, is "nothing but—motion".

Yes; it *is* MOTION but not all "molecular" motion, as the writer means us to infer. Motion as the GREAT BREATH (*vide* "Secret Doctrine," vol. i, *sub voce*)—*ergo* "*sound*" *at the same time*—is the substratum of Kosmic-Motion. It is beginningless and endless, the one *eternal life*, the basis and genesis of the subjective and the objective universe; for LIFE (or Be-ness) is the *fons et origo* of existence or being. But molecular motion is the lowest and most material of its finite manifestations. And if the general law of the conservation of energy leads modern science to the conclusion that psychic activity only represents a special form of motion, this same law, guiding the Occultists, leads them also to the same conviction—and to something else besides, which psycho-physiology leaves entirely out of consideration. If the latter has discovered only in this century that psychic (we say even spiritual) action is subject to the same general and immutable laws of motion as any other phenomenon manifested in the objective realm of Kosmos, and that in both the organic and the *inorganic* (?) worlds every manifestation, whether conscious or unconscious, represents but the result of a collectivity of causes, then in Occult philosophy this represents merely the A,B,C, of its science. "All the world is in the *Swara*; *Swara* is the Spirit itself"—the ONE LIFE or *motion*, say the old books of Hindu Occult philosophy. "The proper translation of the word *Swara* is the *current*

[7] *Psychophysiologie Générale.*

of the life wave", says the author of *Nature's Finer Forces*,[8] and he goes on to explain:

It is that wavy motion which is the cause of the evolution of cosmic undifferentiated matter into the differentiated universe. . . . From whence does this motion come? This motion is the spirit itself. The word *atma* (universal soul) used in the book (*vide infra*), itself carries the idea of eternal motion, coming as it does from the root, AT, or eternal motion; and it may be significantly remarked that the root AT is connected with, is in fact simply another form of, the roots AH, breath, and AS, being. All these roots have for their origin the sound produced by the breath of animals (living beings). . . . The primeval current of the life-wave is then the same which assumes in man the form of inspiratory and expiratory motion of the lungs, and this is the all-pervading source of the evolution and involution of the universe. . . .

So much about *motion* and the "conservation of energy" from old *books on magic*, written and taught ages before the birth of inductive and exact modern science. For what does the latter say more than these books in speaking, for instance, about animal *mechanism*, when it says:

From the visible atom to the celestial body lost in space, *everything is subject to motion;* . . . kept at a definite distance one from the other, in proportion to the motion which animates them, the molecules present constant relations, which they lose only by the addition or the subtraction of a certain quantity of motion.[9]

But Occultism says more than this. While making of motion on *the material plane* and of the conservation of energy, two fundamental laws, or rather two aspects of the same omnipresent law—*Swara*, it denies point blank that these have anything to do with the *free-will* of man which belongs to quite a different plane. The author of *Psychophysiologie Générale*, treating of his *discovery* that psychic action is but motion, and the result of a collectivity of causes—remarks that as it is so, there cannot be any further discussion upon spontaneity—in the sense of any native internal proneness created by the human organism; and adds that the above puts an end to all claim for *free-will*! The Occultist denies the conclusion. The actual fact of man's psychic (we say *manasic* or noëtic) *individuality* is a sufficient warrant against the assumption; for in the case of this conclusion being correct, or being indeed, as the author expresses it, the *collective hallucination of the whole of mankind throughout the ages*, there would be an end also to psychic individuality.

Now by "psychic" individuality we mean that self-determining power which enables man to override circumstances. Place half a dozen animals of the same species under the same circumstances, and their actions, while not identical, will be closely similar; place half a dozen men under the same circumstances and their actions will be as different as their characters, *i. e.*, their *psychic individuality*.

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[8] *The Theosophist*, Feb., 1888, p. 275, by Rama Prasad, President of the *Meerut Theosophical Society*. As the Occult book cited by him says: "It is the *Swara* that has given form to the *first accumulations of the divisions* of the universe; the *Swara* causes evolution and involution; the *Swara* is God, or more properly the *Great Power* itself (*Maheshwara*). The *Swara* is the manifestation of the impression on matter of that power which in man is known to us as *the power which knows itself* (mental and *psychic* consciousness). It is to be understood that the action of this power never ceases. . . . It is unchangeable existence"—and this is the "Motion" of the Scientists and the universal *Breath of Life* of the Occultists.

[9] *Animal Mechanism, a treatise on terrestrial and aerial locomotion*, by E. J. Marey, Professor at the College of France, and Member of the Academy of Medicine.

But if instead of "psychic" we call it the higher Self-conscious Will, then having been shown by the science of psycho-physiology itself that *will has no special organ*, how will the materialists connect it with "molecular" motion at all? As Professor George T. Ladd says:

The phenomena of human consciousness must be regarded as activities of some other form of Real Being than the moving molecules of the brain. They require a subject or ground which is in its nature unlike the phosphorized fats of the central masses, the aggregated nerve-fibres of nerve-cells of the cerebral cortex. This Real Being thus manifested immediately to itself in the phenomena of consciousness, and indirectly to others through the bodily changes, is the *Mind* [*manas*]. To it the mental phenomena are to be attributed as showing what it *is* by what it *does*. The so-called mental "faculties" are only the *modes of the behaviour* in consciousness of this real being. We actually find, by the only method available, that this real being called Mind believes in certain perpetually recurring modes: therefore, we attribute to it certain faculties. . . . Mental faculties are not entities that have an existence of themselves. . . . They are the modes of the behaviour in consciousness of the mind. And the very nature of the classifying acts which lead to their being distinguished, is explicable only upon the assumption that *a Real being called Mind exists*, and is to be distinguished from the real beings known as the physical molecules of the brain's nervous mass.[10]

And having shown that we have to regard consciousness *as a unit* (another occult proposition) the author adds:

We conclude, then, from the previous considerations: *the subject of all the states of consciousness is a real unit-being, called Mind; which is of non-material nature, and acts and develops according to laws of its own, but is specially correlated with certain material molecules and masses forming the substance of the Brain.*[11]

This "Mind" is *manas*, or rather its lower reflection, which whenever it disconnects itself, for the time being, from *kama*, becomes the guide of the highest mental faculties, and is the organ of the free-will in physical man. Therefore, this assumption of the newest psycho-physiology is uncalled for, and the apparent impossibility of reconciling the existence of free-will with the law of the conservation of energy is—a pure fallacy. This was well shown in the "Scientific Letters" of "Elpay" in a criticism of the work. But to prove it finally and set the whole question definitely at rest, does not even require so high an interference (high for us, at any rate) as the Occult laws, but simply a little common sense. Let us analyze the question dispassionately.

It is postulated by one man, presumably a scientist, that because "psychic action is found subject to the general and immutable laws of motion, there is, therefore, *no free will in man*". The "analytical method of exact sciences" has demonstrated it, and materialistic scientists have decreed to "pass the resolution" that the fact should be so accepted by their followers. But there are other and far greater scientists who thought differently. For instance, Sir William Lawrence, the eminent surgeon, declared in his lectures[12] that:—

The philosophical doctrine of the soul, and its separate existence, has nothing to do

[10] The higher *manas* or "Ego" (*Kshetrâjna*) is the "Silent Spectator", and the voluntary "sacrificial victim": the lower manas, its representative—a tyrannical despot, truly.

[11] *Elements of Physiological Psychology.* A treatise of the activities and nature of the mind, from the Physical and Experimental Point of View, pp. 606 and 613.

[12] W. Lawrence: *Lectures on Comparative Anatomy, Physiology, Zōology, and the Natural History of Man*, London, 1848, p. 6.

with this physiological question, but rests on a species of proof altogether different. These sublime dogmas could never have been brought to light by the labours of the anatomist and physiologist. An immaterial and spiritual being could not have been discovered amid the blood and filth of the dissecting room.

Now, let us examine on the testimony of the materialist how this universal solvent called the "analytical method" is applied in this special case. The author of the *Psychophysiologie* decomposes psychic activity into its compound elements, traces them back to motion, and, failing to find in them the slightest trace of free-will or spontaneity, jumps to the conclusion that the latter have no existence in general; nor are they to be found in that psychic activity which he has just decomposed. "Are not the fallacy and error of such an unscientific proceeding self-evident?", asks his critic; and then argues very correctly that:

At this rate, and starting from the standpoint of this analytical method, one would have an equal right to deny every phenomenon in nature from first to last. For, do not sound and light, heat and electricity, like all other chemical processes, once decomposed into their respective elements, lead the experimenter back to the same motion, wherein all the peculiarities of the given elements disappear, leaving behind them only "the vibrations of molecules"? But does it necessarily follow that for all that, heat, light, electricity —are but illusions instead of the actual manifestations of the peculiarities of our real world? Such peculiarities are not, of course, to be found in compound elements, simply because we cannot expect that a part should contain, from first to last, the properties of the whole. What should we say of a chemist, who, having decomposed water into its compounds, hydrogen and oxygen, without finding in them the special characteristics of water, would maintain that such did not exist at all nor could they be found in water? What of an antiquary who upon examining distributed type and finding no sense in every separate letter, should assert that there was no such thing as sense to be found in any printed document? And does not the author of *Psycho-physiology* act just in this way when he denies the existence of free-will or self-spontaneity in man, on the grounds that this distinctive faculty of the highest psychic activity is absent from those compound elements which he has analyzed?

Most undeniably no separate piece of brick, of wood, or iron, each of which has once been a part of a building now in ruins, can be expected to preserve the smallest trace of the architecture of that building—in the hands of the chemist, at any rate; though it would in those of a *psychometer*, a faculty by the by, which demonstrates far more powerfully the law of the conservation of energy than any physical science does, and shows it acting as much in the subjective or psychic worlds as on the objective and material planes. The genesis of sound, on this plane, has to be traced back to the same motion, and the same correlation of forces is at play during the phenomenon as in the case of every other manifestation. Shall the physicist, then, who decomposes sound into its compound element of vibrations and fails to find in them any harmony or special melody, deny the existence of the latter? And does not this prove that the analytical method, having to deal exclusively with the elements, and nothing to do with their *combinations*, leads the physicist to talk very glibly about motion, vibration, and what not, and to make him entirely lose sight of the *harmony produced by certain combinations of that motion* or the "harmony of vibrations"? Criticism, then, is right in accusing Materialistic psycho-physiology of neglecting these

all-important distinctions; in maintaining that if a careful observation of facts is a duty in the simplest physical phenomena, how much more should it be so when applied to such complex and important questions as psychic force and faculties? And yet in most cases all such essential differences are overlooked, and the analytical method is applied in a most arbitrary and prejudiced way. What wonder, then, if, in carrying back psychic action to its basic elements of motion, the psycho-physiologist, depriving it during the process of all its essential characteristics, should destroy it; and having destroyed it, it only stands to reason that he is unable to find that which exists in it no longer. He forgets, in short, or rather purposely ignores the fact, that though, like all other phenomena on the material plane, psychic manifestations *must* be related in their final analysis to the world of vibration (*"sound" being the substratum of universal Akasa*), yet, in their origin, they belong to *a different and a higher World* of HARMONY. Elpay has a few severe sentences against the assumptions of those he calls "physico-biologists" which are worthy of note.

Unconscious of their error, the psycho-physiologists identify the compound elements of psychic activity with that activity itself: hence the conclusion from the standpoint of the analytical method, that the highest, distinctive specialty of the human soul—free-will, spontaneity—is an illusion, and no psychic reality. But as we have just shown, such identification not only has nothing in common with exact science, but is simply impermissible, as it clashes with all the fundamental laws of logic, in consequence of which all these so-called physico-biological deductions emanating from the said identification vanish into thin air. Thus to trace psychic action primarily to motion, means in no way to prove the "illusion of free-will". And, as in the case of water, whose specific qualities cannot be deprived of their reality although they are not to be found in its compound gases, so with regard to the specific property of psychic action: its spontaneity cannot be refused to psychic reality, though this property is not contained in those finite elements into which the psycho-physiologist dismembers the activity in question under his mental scalpel.

This method is "a distinctive feature of modern science in its endeavour to satisfy inquiry into the *nature* of the objects of its investigation by a detailed description of their *development*", says G. T. Ladd. And the author of *The Elements of Physiological Psychology* adds:—

The universal process of "Becoming" has been almost personified and deified so as to make it the true ground of all finite and concrete existence. . . . The attempt is made to refer all the so-called development of the mind to the evolution of the substance of the brain, under purely physical and mechanical causes. This attempt, then, denies that any real unit-being called the Mind needs to be assumed as undergoing a process of development according to laws of its own. . . . On the other hand, all attempts to account for the orderly increase in complexity and comprehensiveness of the mental phenomena by tracing the physical evolution of the brain are wholly unsatisfactory to many minds. We have no hesitation in classing ourselves among this number. Those facts of experience which show a correspondence in the order of the development of the body and the mind, and even a certain necessary dependence of the latter upon the former, are, of course, to be admitted; but they are equally compatible with another view of the mind's development. This other view has the additional advantages that it makes room for many other facts of experience which are very difficult of reconciliation with any materialistic theory. On the whole, *the history of each individual's experiences is such as requires the assumption that a real unit-being (a Mind) is undergoing a process of*

development, in relation to the changing condition or evolution of the brain, and yet in accordance with a nature and laws of its own (p. 616).

How closely this last "assumption" of science approaches the teachings of the Occult philosophy will be shown in Part II of this article. Meanwhile, we may close with an answer to the latest materialistic fallacy, which may be summarized in a few words. As every psychic action has for its substratum the nervous elements whose existence it postulates, and outside which it cannot act; as the activity of the nervous elements is only molecular motion, there is therefore no need to invent a special and psychic Force for the explanation of our brain work. *Free Will would force* Science to postulate an invisible *Free-Willer*, a creator of that special Force.

We agree: "not the slightest need", of a creator of "that special" or any other Force. Nor has any one ever claimed such an absurdity. But between *creating* and *guiding*, there is a difference, and the latter implies in no way any creation of the energy of motion, or, indeed, of any special energy. *Psychic* mind (in contradistinction to manasic or noëtic mind) only transforms this energy of the "unit-being" according to "a nature and laws of its own"—to use Ladd's felicitous expression. The "unit-being" creates nothing, but only causes a natural correlation in accordance with both the physical laws and *laws of its own*; having to use the Force, it guides its direction, choosing the paths along which it will proceed, and stimulating it to action. And, as its activity is *sui generis*, and independent, it carries this energy from this world of disharmony into its own sphere of harmony. Were it not *independent* it could not do so. As it is, the freedom of man's will is beyond doubt or cavil. Therefore, as already observed, there is no question of creation, but simply of *guidance*. Because the sailor at the wheel does not create the steam in the engine, shall we say that he does not direct the vessel?

And, because we refuse to accept the fallacies of some psycho-physiologists as the *last* word of science, do we furnish thereby a new proof that free-will is an *hallucination*? We deride the *animalistic* idea. How far more scientific and logical, besides being as poetical as it is grand, is the teaching in the *Katha Upanishad*, which, in a beautiful and descriptive metaphor, says that: "The senses are the horses, body is the chariot, mind (*kama-manas*) is the reins, and intellect (or *free-will*) the charioteer." Verily, there is more *exact* science in the less important of the *Upanishads*, composed thousands of years ago, than in all the materialistic ravings of modern "physico-biology" and "psychophysiology" put together!

II.

. . . . *The knowledge of the past, present, and future, is embodied in Kshetrajna* (*the "Self"*).—Occult Axioms.

Having explained in what particulars, and why, as Occultists, we disagree with materialistic physiological psychology, we may now proceed to point out the difference between psychic and noëtic mental functions, the noëtic not being recognized by official science.

Moreover, we, Theosophists, understand the terms "psychic" and "psychism" somewhat differently from the average public, from science, and even theology, the latter giving it a significance which both science and Theosophy reject, and the public in general remaining with a very hazy conception of what is really meant by the terms. For many, there is little, if any, difference between "psychic" and "psychological", both words relating in some way to the *human* soul. Some modern metaphysicians have wisely agreed to disconnect the word Mind (*pneuma*) from Soul (*psyche*), the one being the rational, spiritual part, the other—*psyche*—the living principle in man, the breath that *animates* him (from *anima*, soul). Yet, if this is so, how in this case refuse a soul to *animals*? These are, no less than man, informed with the same principle of sentient life, the *nephesh* of the 2nd chapter of *Genesis*. The Soul is by no means the mind, nor can an idiot, bereft of the latter, be called a "soul-less" being. To describe, as the physiologists do, the human Soul in its relations to senses and appetites, desires and passions, common to man and the brute, and then endow it with God-like intellect, with spiritual and rational faculties which can take their source but in a *supersensible* world—is to throw for ever the veil of an impenetrable mystery over the subject. Yet in modern science, "psychology" and "psychism" relate only to conditions of the nervous system, mental phenomena being traced solely to molecular action. The higher *noëtic* character of the Mind-Principle is entirely ignored, and even rejected, as a "superstition" by both physiologists and psychologists. Psychology, in fact, has become a synonym in many cases for the science of psychiatry. Therefore, students of Theosophy being compelled to differ from all these, have adopted the doctrine that underlies the time-honoured philosophies of the East. What it is, may be found further on.

To understand better the foregoing arguments and those which follow, the reader is asked to turn to the editorial in the September *Lucifer* ("The Dual Aspect of Wisdom", p. 3), and acquaint himself with the *double aspect* of that which is termed by St. James in his Third Epistle at once—the *devilish, terrestrial* wisdom, and the "wisdom from above". In another editorial, "Kosmic Mind" (April, 1890), it is also stated that the ancient Hindus endowed every cell in the human body with consciousness, giving each the name of a God or Goddess. Speaking of atoms in the name of science and philosophy, Professor Ladd calls them in his work "*supersensible beings*". Occultism regards every atom[13] as an "independent entity" and every cell as a "conscious unit". It explains that no sooner do such atoms group to form cells, than the latter become endowed with consciousness, each of its own kind, and with *free-will to act within* the limits of law. Nor are we entirely deprived of scientific evidence for such statements as the two above named editorials well prove. More than one learned physiologist of the golden minority, in our own day, moreover, is rapidly coming to the conviction, that memory has no seat, no special organ of its own in the human brain, but that it has *seats* in every organ of the body.

"No good ground exists for speaking of any special organ, or seat of memory",

[13] One of the names of Brahmâ is *anu* or "atom".

writes Professor J. T. Ladd.[14] "Every organ indeed, every area, and every limit of the nervous system has its own memory" (p. 553 *loc. cit.*).

The seat of memory, then, is assuredly neither here nor there, but everywhere throughout the human body. To locate its organ in the brain is to limit and dwarf the Universal Mind and its countless Rays (the *Manasa putra*) which inform every rational mortal. As we write for Theosophists, first of all, we care little for the psychophobian prejudices of the Materialists who may read this and sniff contemptuously at the mention of "Universal Mind", and the Higher *noëtic* souls of men. But, what *is* memory, we ask. "Both presentation of sense and image of memory, are transitory phases of consciousness", we are answered. But what is Consciousness itself?—we ask again. "*We cannot define Consciousness*", Professor Ladd tells us.[15] Thus, that which we are asked to do by physiological psychology is, to content ourselves with controverting the various states of Consciousness by other people's private and unverifiable hypotheses; and this, on "questions of cerebral physiology *where experts and novices are alike ignorant*", to use the pointed remark of the said author. Hypothesis for hypothesis then, we may as well hold to the teachings of our Seers, as to the conjectures of those who deny both such Seers and their wisdom. The more so, as we are told by the same honest man of science, that "if metaphysics and ethics cannot properly dictate their facts and conclusions to the science of physiological psychology, . . . in turn this science cannot properly dictate to metaphysics and ethics the conclusions which they shall draw from facts of Consciousness, by giving out its myths and fables in the garb of well ascertained history of the cerebral processes" (p. 544).

Now, since the metaphysics of Occult physiology and psychology postulate within mortal man an immortal entity, "divine Mind", or *Nous*, whose pale and too often distorted reflection is that which we call "Mind" and intellect in men—virtually an entity apart from the former during the period of every incarnation—we say that the *two* sources of "memory" are in these two "principles". These two we distinguish as the Higher *Manas* (Mind or Ego), and the *Kama-Manas*, *i. e.*, the rational, but earthly or physical intellect of man, incased in, and bound by, matter, therefore subject to the influence of the latter: the all-conscious SELF, that which reincarnates periodically—verily the WORD made flesh!—and which is always the same, while its reflected "Double", changing with every new incarnation and personality, is, therefore, conscious but for a life-period. The latter "principle" is the *Lower* Self, or that which, manifesting through our *organic* system, acting on this plane of illusion, imagines itself the *Ego Sum*, and thus falls into what Buddhist philosophy brands as the "heresy of separateness". The former, we term INDIVIDUALITY, the latter *Personality*. From the first proceeds all the *noëtic* element, from the second, the *psychic*, *i. e.*, "terrestrial wisdom" at best, as it is influenced by all the chaotic stimuli of the human or rather *animal passions* of the living body.

The "Higher EGO" cannot act directly on the body, as its consciousness be-

[14] Professor of Philosophy at Yale University.
[15] *Elements of Physiological Psychology.*

longs to quite another plane and planes of ideation: the "lower" *Self* does: and its action and behaviour *depend on its free will and choice* as to whether it will gravitate more towards its parent ("the Father in Heaven") or the "animal" which it informs, the man of flesh. The "Higher Ego", as part of the essence of the UNIVERSAL MIND, is unconditionally omniscient on its own plane, and only potentially so in our terrestrial sphere, as it has to act solely through its *alter ego* —the Personal Self. Now, although the former is the vehicle of all knowledge of the past, the present, and the future, and although it is from this fountain-head that its "double" catches occasional glimpses of that which is beyond the senses of man, and transmits them to certain brain cells (unknown to science in their functions), thus making of man a *Seer*, a soothsayer, and a prophet; yet the memory of bygone events—especially of the earth earthy—has its seat in the Personal Ego alone. No memory of a purely daily-life function, of a physical, egotistical, or of a lower mental nature—such as, *e. g.*, eating and drinking, enjoying personal sensual pleasures, transacting business to the detriment of one's neighbour, etc., etc., has aught to do with the "Higher" Mind or EGO. Nor has it any direct dealings on this physical plane with either our brain or our heart—for these two are the organs of a power higher than the *Personality* —but only with our passional organs, such as the liver, the stomach, the spleen, etc. Thus it only stands to reason that the memory of such-like events must be first awakened in that organ which was the first to induce the action remembered afterwards, and conveyed it to our "sense-thought", which is entirely *distinct from the "supersensuous" thought*. It is only the higher forms of the latter, the *superconscious* mental experiences, that can correlate with the cerebral and cardiac centres. The memories of physical and *selfish* (or personal) deeds, on the other hand, together with the mental experiences of a terrestrial nature, and of earthly biological functions, can of necessity, only be correlated with the molecular constitution of various *Kamic* organs, and the "dynamical associations" of the elements of the nervous system in each particular organ.

Therefore, when Professor Ladd, after showing that every element of the nervous system has a memory of its own, adds:—"This view belongs to the very essence of every theory which considers conscious mental reproduction as only one form or phase of the biological fact of organic memory"—he must include among such theories the Occult teaching. For no Occultist could express such teaching more correctly than the Professor, who says, in winding up his argument: "We might properly speak, then, of the memory of the end-organ of vision or of hearing, of the memory of the spinal cord and of the different so-called 'centres' of reflex action belonging to the cords of the memory of the medulla oblongata, the cerebellum, etc." This is the essence of Occult teaching —even in the Tantra works. Indeed, every organ in our body *has its own memory*. For if it is endowed with a consciousness "of its own kind", every cell must of necessity have also a memory of its own kind, as likewise its own *psychic* and *noëtic* action. Responding to the touch of both a physical and a *metaphysical* Force,[16] the impulse given by the *psychic* (or psycho-molecular) Force will act

[16] We fondly trust this very *unscientific* term will throw no "Animalist" into hysterics *beyond* recovery.

from *without within*; while that of the *noëtic* (shall we call it Spiritual-dynamical?) Force works *from within without*. For, as our body is the covering of the inner "principles", soul, mind, life, etc., so the molecule or the cell is the body in which dwell its "principles", the (to our senses and comprehension) immaterial atoms which compose that cell. The cell's activity and behaviour are determined by its being propelled either inwardly or outwardly, by the noëtic or the psychic Force, the former having no relation to the *physical* cells proper. Therefore, while the latter act under the unavoidable law of the conservation and correlation of physical energy, the atoms—being psycho-spiritual, *not physical units—act under laws of their own*, just as Professor Ladd's "Unit-Being", which is our "Mind-Ego", does, in his very philosophical and scientific hypothesis. Every human organ and each cell in the latter has a key-board of its own, like that of a piano, only that it registers and emits sensations instead of sounds. Every key contains the potentiality of good or bad, of producing harmony or disharmony. This depends on the impulse given and the combinations produced; on the force of the touch of the artist at work, a "double-faced Unity", indeed. And it is the action of this or the other "Face" of the Unity that determines the nature and the dynamical character of the manifested phenomena as a resulting action, and this whether they be physical or mental. For the whole life of man is guided by this double-faced Entity. If the impulse comes from the "Wisdom above", the Force applied being noëtic or spiritual, the results will be actions worthy of the divine propeller; if from the "terrestrial, devilish wisdom" (psychic power), man's activities will be selfish, based solely on the exigencies of his physical, hence animal, nature. The above may sound to the average reader as pure nonsense; but every Theosophist must understand when told that there are *Manasic* as well as *Kamic* organs in him, although the cells of his body answer to both physical and spiritual impulses.

Verily that body, so desecrated by Materialism and man himself, is the temple of the Holy Grail, the *Adytum* of the grandest, nay, of all the mysteries of nature in our solar universe. That body is an Æolian harp, chorded with two sets of strings, one made of pure silver, the other of catgut. When the breath from the divine Fiat brushes softly over the former, man becomes like unto *his* God—but the other set feels it not. It needs the breeze of a strong terrestrial wind, impregnated with animal effluvia, to set its animal chords vibrating. It is the function of the physical, lower mind to act upon the physical organs and their cells; but it is the higher mind *alone* which can influence the atoms interacting in those cells, which interaction is alone capable of exciting the brain, *viâ the spinal "centre" cord*, to a mental representation of spiritual ideas far beyond any objects on this material plane. The phenomena of divine consciousness have to be regarded as activities of our mind on another and a higher plane, working through something less substantial than the moving molecules of the brain. They cannot be explained as the simple resultant of the cerebral physiological processes, as indeed the latter only condition them or give them a final form for purposes of concrete manifestation. Occultism teaches that the liver and the spleen-cells are the most subservient to the action of our "personal"

mind, the heart being the organ *par excellence* through which the "Higher" Ego acts—through the Lower Self.

Nor can the visions or memory of purely terrestrial events be transmitted directly through the mental perceptions of the brain—the direct recipient of the impressions of the heart. All such recollections have to be first stimulated by and awakened in the organs which were the originators, as already stated, of the various causes that led to the results, or, the direct recipients and participators of the latter. In other words, if what is called "association of *ideas*" has much to do with the awakening of memory, the mutual interaction and consistent inter-relation between the personal "Mind-Entity" and the organs of the human body have far more so. A hungry stomach evokes the vision of a past banquet, because its action is reflected and repeated in the *personal* mind. But even before the memory of the personal Self radiates the vision from the tablets wherein are stored the experiences of one's daily life—even to the minutest details—the memory of the stomach has already evoked the same. And so with all the organs of the body. It is they which originate according to their animal needs and desires the electro-vital sparks that illuminate the field of consciousness in the Lower Ego; and it is these sparks which in their turn awaken to function the reminiscences in it. The whole human body is, as said, a vast sounding board, in which each cell bears a long record of impressions connected with its parent organ, and each cell has a memory and a consciousness of its kind, or call it instinct if you will. These impressions are, according to the nature of the organ, physical, psychic, or mental, as they relate to this or another plane. They may be called "states of consciousness" only for the want of a better expression—as there are states of instinctual, mental, and purely abstract, or spiritual consciousness. If we trace all such "psychic" actions to brain-work, it is only because in that mansion called the human body the brain is the front-door, and the only one which opens out into Space. All the others are inner doors, openings in the private building, through which travel incessantly the transmitting agents of memory and sensation. The clearness, the vividness, and intensity of these depend on the state of health and the organic soundness of the transmitters. But their reality, in the sense of trueness or correctness, is due to the "principle" they originate from, and the preponderance in the Lower *Manas* of the *noëtic* or of the *phrenic* ("Kamic", terrestrial) element.

For, as Occultism teaches, if the Higher Mind-Entity—the permanent and the immortal—is of the divine homogeneous essence of "Alaya-Akasa",[17] or Mahat,—its reflection, the Personal Mind, is, as a temporary "Principle", of the Substance of the Astral Light. As a pure ray of the "Son of the Universal Mind", it could perform no functions in the body, and would remain powerless over the turbulent organs of Matter. Thus, while its inner constitution is Manasic, its "body", or rather functioning essence, is heterogeneous, and leavened with the Astral Light, the lowest element of Ether. It is a part of the mission of the Manasic Ray, gradually to get rid of the blind, deceptive element which, though it makes of it an active spiritual entity on this plane, still brings

[17] Another name for the universal mind.

it into so close contact with matter as to entirely becloud its divine nature and stultify its intuitions.

This leads us to see the difference between the pure noëtic and the terrestrial psychic visions of seership and mediumship. The former can be obtained by one of two means; (*a*) on the condition of paralyzing at will the *memory* and the instinctual, independent action of all the material organs and even cells in the body of flesh, an act which, once that the light of the Higher Ego has consumed and subjected for ever the passional nature of the personal, lower Ego, is easy, but requires an adept; and (*b*) of being a reincarnation of one who, in a previous birth, had attained through extreme purity of life and efforts in the right direction almost to a *Yogi*-state of holiness and saintship. There is also a third possibility of reaching in mystic visions the plane of the higher Manas; but it is only occasional and does not depend on the will of the Seer, but on the extreme weakness and exhaustion of the material body through illness and suffering. The Seeress of Prevorst was an instance of the latter case; and Jacob Boëhme of our second category. In all other cases of abnormal seership, of so-called clairaudience, clairvoyance and trances, it is simply—*mediumship*.

Now what is a medium? The term medium, when not applied simply to things and objects, is supposed to be a person through whom the action of another person or being is either manifested or transmitted. Spiritualists believing in communications with disembodied spirits, and that these can manifest through, or impress sensitives to transmit "messages" from them, regard mediumship as a blessing and a great privilege. We Theosophists, on the other hand, who do not believe in the "communion of spirits" as Spiritualists do, regard the gift as one of the most dangerous of abnormal nervous diseases. A medium is simply one in whose personal Ego, or terrestrial mind (*psuche*), the percentage of "astral" light so preponderates as to impregnate with it their whole physical constitution. Every organ and cell thereby is attuned, so to speak, and subjected to an enormous and abnormal tension. The mind is ever on the plane of, and quite immersed in, that deceptive light whose *soul* is divine, but whose body—the light waves on the lower planes, infernal; for they are but the black and disfigured reflections of the earth's memories. The untrained eye of the poor sensitive cannot pierce the dark mist, the dense fog of the terrestrial emanations, to see beyond in the radiant field of the eternal truths. His vision is out of focus. His senses, accustomed from his birth, like those of a native of the London slums, to stench and filth, to the unnatural distortions of sights and images tossed on the kaleidoscopic waves of the astral plane—are unable to discern the true from the false. And thus, the pale soulless corpses moving in the trackless fields of "Kama loka", appear to him the living images of the "dear departed" ones; the broken echoes of once human voices, passing through his mind, suggest to him well co-ordinated phrases, which he repeats, in ignorance that their final form and polish were received in the innermost depths of his own brain-factory. And hence the sight and the hearing of that which, if seen in its true nature, would have struck the medium's heart cold with horror, now fills him with a sense of beatitude and confidence. He

really believes that the immeasurable vistas displayed before him are the real spiritual world, the abode of the blessed disembodied angels.

We describe the broad main features and facts of mediumship, there being no room in such an article for exceptional cases. We maintain—having unfortunately passed at one period of life *personally* through such experiences—that on the whole, mediumship is most dangerous; and *psychic* experiences when accepted indiscriminately lead only to honestly deceiving others, because the medium is the first self-deceived victim. Moreover, a too close association with the "Old Terrestrial Serpent" is infectious. The odic and magnetic currents of the Astral Light often incite to murder, drunkenness, immorality, and, as Eliphas Lévi expresses it, natures not altogether pure "can be driven headlong by the blind forces set in motion in the *Light*"—by the errors and sins imposed on its waves.

And this is how the great Mage of the XIXth century corroborates the foregoing when speaking of the Astral Light:

> We have said that to acquire magical power, two things are necessary: to disengage the will from all servitude, and to exercise it in control.
>
> The sovereign will (of the adept) is represented in our symbols by the woman who crushes the serpent's head, and by the resplendent angel who represses the dragon, and holds him under his foot and spear; the great magical agent, the dual current of light, the living and astral *fire* of the earth, has been represented in the ancient theogonies by the serpent with the head of a bull, a ram, or a dog. It is the double serpent of the *caduceus*, it is the Old Serpent of *Genesis*, but it is also the *brazen serpent of Moses* entwined around the *tau*, that is to say, the generative *lingha*. It is also the goat of the witch-sabbath, and the Baphomet of the Templars; it is the *Hylé* of the Gnostics; it is the double-tailed serpent which forms the legs of the solar cock of the Abraxas: finally, it is the Devil of M. Eudes de Mirville. But in very fact it is the blind force which souls (*i. e.*, the lower *Manas* or Nephesh) have to conquer to liberate themselves from the bonds of the earth; for if their will does not free "them from this *fatal attraction*, they will be absorbed in the current by the force which has produced them, and *will return to the central and eternal fire*".[18]

The "central and eternal fire" is that disintegrating Force, that gradually consumes and burns out the *Kama-rupa*, or "personality", in the Kama-loka, whither it goes after death. And verily, the Mediums are attracted by the astral light; it is the direct cause of their personal "souls" being absorbed "by the force which has produced" their terrestrial elements. And, therefore, as the same Occultist tells us:

> All the magical operations consist in *freeing* one's self from the coils of the Ancient Serpent; then to place the foot on its head, and lead it according to the operator's will. "I will give unto thee", says the Serpent, in the Gospel myth, "all the kingdoms of the earth, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." The initiated should reply to him, "I will not fall down, but thou shalt crouch at my feet; thou wilt give me nothing, but I will make use of thee and take whatever I wish. For *I am thy Lord and Master!*"

And as such, the *Personal Ego*, becoming at one with its divine parent, shares in the immortality of the latter. Otherwise. . . .

Enough, however. Blessed is he who has acquainted himself with the dual powers at work in the Astral Light; thrice blessed he who has learned to discern the *Noëtic* from the *Psychic* action of the "Double-Faced" God in him, and who knows the potency of his own Spirit—or "Soul Dynamics".

[18] *Dogme et Rituel de la Haute Magie*, quoted in *Isis Unveiled*.

REVIEWS

Chinese Women: Yesterday and To-Day, by Florence Ayscough; Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1937; price, $3.50.

Florence Ayscough has written several extremely interesting books on China, and her work, with Amy Lowell, on the translation of Chinese poetry, is well known. Her latest book is somewhat disappointing. It is well written and full of information, but surprisingly lacking in discrimination.

Chinese women, enclosed in their secluded court yards, theoretically occupied a position of equality with men, although their sphere of action was entirely different. "The theoretical position of women is clearly set forth in the ancient learning: Chinese philosophy, based on belief in the interaction of the principles of Yin and Yang [Negative and Positive], which by this interaction produce everything in the visible palpable world, postulates equal importance of the functions pertaining to each." Mrs. Ayscough quotes a chapter of the *Book of Rites:*

Hearken to the Son-of-Heaven regarding tenets for men. Hearken to Her-who-is-equal-to-the-Sovereign regarding compliance required of women. Son of Heaven directs inherent principle of Yang essence; She-who-is-His-equal regulates Yin qualities. Son of Heaven rules all without; She-who-is-His-equal directs all within. If tenets of men be not cultivated, functions of Yang essence will not evolve, their opposition will be manifest in the sky, sun will suffer eclipse as though consumed by a living creature. If compliance of women be not cultivated, Yin qualities will not develop, their opposition will be manifest in the sky, moon will suffer eclipse. When the sun vanishes, Son of Heaven puts on plain robes of raw silk, rectifies government within Six Palace Halls, purifies Yang essence in All-below-the-sky. When the moon is consumed, She-who-is-equal-to-the-Sovereign dresses in plain robe of raw silk, regulates administration of Six Palace Halls, purifies Yin qualities in All-below-the-sky. Son of Heaven is to His Consort as sun to moon, as Yang to Yin. Each essential to the other, she perfects the whole.

In every civilization and nation, whatever the customs regulating society, there are seemingly horrible injustices and suffering. Whether behind the "baton door", in the harem, or in the department store or office, the lot of countless women is unfortunate; but so is that of men. As Mephistophilis remarks in Marlowe's *Faustus*, "This is Hell, nor am I out of it". However, women, at all times, are not without resources, and are generally able to adjust conditions more or less to their satisfaction. The Chinese women are no exception. "In talking once with a Japanese gentleman regarding women of different countries

and their characteristics, I mentioned the Chinese. An expression of terror came over his face. 'But they', he said, 'are very fierce'."

Mrs. Ayscough gives most interesting descriptions of the life of women in former times, and contrasts it with conditions since the Revolution. She quotes from old books and ballads. She has chapters on "Girlhood: Then and Now", "Marriage: Then and Now", "Education", "Professions", etc. She writes a short history of the three Soong sisters, Mrs. H. H. Kung, Mrs. Sun Yat-sen, and Mrs. Chiang-Kai-Shih. These ladies, the daughters of a Chinese missionary convert to Christianity, were all educated in America. Mrs. Chiang Kai-Shih is well known to readers of the daily Press, and is a horrible example of the exuberant vulgarity of modern publicity. Mrs. Ayscough, by some legerdemain, is able to extend her admiration for the virtues of the ancient Chinese ladies—modesty, discretion, good taste—to the blatancy of her contemporaries.

Part Two of the book contains just such an amazing antithesis. The first part is given to the life of a revolutionary heroine, Ch'iu Chin, Gem of Autumn. Ch'iu Chin devoted herself to overthrowing the Manchu dynasty, and to the modern education of women. She was decapitated by the Manchu authorities. To-day, a monument has been raised to her memory. She undoubtedly possessed many heroic qualities, and was actuated by a zeal for what she considered to be the liberation of her country. It would be unjust to minimize the courage and spirit of self-sacrifice which she displayed, but one is filled with a profound sadness when one considers its mistaken application. What benefits has the downfall of the imperial system conferred on China? What advantages has mass-education to offer in place of real, racial culture? The great women, whom Mrs. Ayscough considers to have formed the atavistic ancestry of Ch'iu Chin, and whose lives are described after hers, would not acknowledge their progeny. The Warrior Maiden Hua Mu-lan, who fought for twelve years in the wars against the barbarians, disguised as a man, did so only to save her old father from military service. Pan Chao, the historian, the "most famous woman of China", who wrote the still popular book *Precepts for Women* in about the year 106 A.D., would have been unutterably shocked by the actions and theories of Gem of Autumn. Mrs. Ayscough gives a translation of Pan Chao's charming book, "People of old had a saying: 'Is perfect virtue far away? I seek ardently for perfect virtue; . . . it descends, a bird, to earth.' This saying may be applied to the qualities of Woman."

The great-aunt of Pan Chao, Pan chieh-yü, is also celebrated in Chinese history:

> The Emperor, in his infatuation, once requested her to drive with him in his "chariot". With sensitive regard for what rulers should and should not do, she refused, saying that it was the place of courtiers, not ladies, to accompany the Son of Heaven in public. This incident is depicted on the famous scroll by Ku K'ai-chih in the British Museum. The lady, with flowing scarlet streamers, her lacquer black hair dressed high in an elaborate head-dress, gently reproves the Monarch for his suggestion.

Later, she incurred his displeasure, and retired to live with the Dowager

Empress, sending him the well known poem on the Autumn Fan, entitled "A Song of Grief":

Newly cut, stretched, argent, white,
Pure white as frost, as snow,
A fan: perfectly formed—the circle of happiness.
Round, round, a bright moon.
Treasured in sleeve, taken out, put back,
Moved, waved, it wafts a gentle breeze.
Often fear, when Autumn Season comes,
When cold wind, whirling, dispels fiery heat,
Discarded, laid by, it will be left in bamboo box.
Favour, passion, midway through life are severed.

Part Three contains a condensed version of another famous book for the instruction of women, a collection of biographies of out-standing examples of feminine virtue. They are charming stories. Everyone who loves China will be interested in Mrs. Ayscough's book, but the discriminating reader will ask himself how much of the old China still exists. Looking upon the breakdown of its ancient ethics, upon its present anarchy, one may well despair, and fancy it lost for ever. Surely, nothing real is ever lost. The power and virtue which China possessed are preserved, and will incarnate again. Do not the Masters of Wisdom say, "Take long views"? ST.C. LAD.

Les Grands Cimitières sous la Lune, by Georges Bernanos; Librairie Plon, Paris, 1938; price, $1.25.

M. Bernanos is perhaps best known as the author of the powerful novel, *Sous le Soleil de Satan*. He is a Catholic, and his sympathies are definitely royalist and traditionalist; but he is temperamentally a "free-lance". We doubt whether he finds it easy to co-operate with anyone. He has the terrible gift of seeing clearly the shortcomings of his compatriots, especially of those who belong to his own caste; and he has the even more terrible gift of exposing those shortcomings with mordant irony. He has the virtues and the vices of the satirist. He can speak the truth fearlessly, but he is sometimes very unjust. Possibly one trouble with France to-day is that she has too many "free-lances", too many satirists. As more than one historian has remarked, the French have seldom co-operated voluntarily unless they have been driven to unite under the relentless pressure of a foreign foe. Few great nations have suffered more from the ravages of civil war; few, if any, have been capable of such a "sacred union" in times of real extremity.

To be fair to M. Bernanos, however, his sardonic humour does not conceal the deeper motives which impel him to write. He sympathizes with the poor and the down-trodden, with the victims of oppression and hypocrisy in all lands. It is his abiding love of France which stirs his rage against those who profess to speak in her name, but whose primary concern, as he firmly believes, is the preservation of their personal privileges. He is unable to free himself from the sense of impending doom, as he contemplates the series of catastrophes which are threatening the very foundations of Christian civilization.

In this book M. Bernanos describes his immediate contact with some of the worst horrors and barbarities of the Spanish Revolution. As it happened, his point of contact was the island of Majorca, and the "barbarians" who committed the atrocities were not the so-called Loyalists but adherents of the Insurgent cause. The disgust and righteous indignation which M. Bernanos felt, has been increased by the efforts of many conservatives and Catholic ecclesiastics to represent the Insurgents as the heroes of a "Holy War". He literally cannot contain himself when he hears General Franco described as a *preux chevalier*, and his "alliance" with Mussolini and Hitler as a "Crusade". He holds no brief whatsoever for the Loyalists or their radical sympathizers in other countries, but he is oppressed by the thought that the "defenders of civilization" can apparently imagine only one way of suppressing the communists, and that is by largely adopting their aims and tactics. Many citizens of the contemporary world sympathize with his equal condemnation of the rival ideologies of fascism and communism, which are supposed to be so different but which are fundamentally so very much alike.

M. Bernanos is convinced that what is at stake is the preservation of any sort of Christian civilization. It is not a question merely of maintaining the right to hold, transmit and exchange personal property, for the totalitarian state—whether it be controlled by the "right" or by the "left"—absorbs the most elementary rights and liberties of the individual, including the most fundamental of all, the right of practising the faith which he has inherited from his fathers. M. Bernanos insists upon the fact that Christian civilization cannot be successfully defended by methods which would disgrace a savage. But he argues that this is the actual programme of many who are the most vociferous in the claim that they are custodians of the Master's word:

> In my opinion, to practise freely my faith, in the spirit of the Gospel—pardon me—it is not only necessary to permit me to practise it; it is also necessary that I be not constrained to practise it. We cannot be driven to the love of God by threat and menace. The clergy have sometimes forgotten this fact. . . . Two thousand years ago there were pronounced against the Pharisees the most severe words of the Gospel, words of a severity which astounds the heart, and to-day this race is not yet near extinction. Which of you can boast that he has not in his veins a single drop of the blood of those vipers? If you cannot defend your parishes [from Pharisaism], we have the right to fear that it will make the law in your armies. . . . I should like to express myself more simply, with simpler words. We shall not leave the sword of Christian France in such hands. We shall face the worst, if need be with Samaritans, publicans, thieves and adulterers as our comrades, following the example given us by the Master whom we serve.

These are hard words, and they are typical of the spirit of the book. The gentle reader may find them provocative, if not excessive. The fact is that the problems which impose themselves upon the nations to-day, drive men to imagine desperate remedies. In 1914 the division between good and evil was clear-cut; no superlative wisdom was required to recognize that the Allies were fighting on the side of the Angels. But at present, both in politics and war, it is not always easy to decide which is the side of the Angels, or whether they are on any side. Many of us feel that if we were Spaniards, we should support the

Insurgents; but it is painfully evident that we should be serving what M. Bernanos calls "General Lesser-of-Two-Evils" rather than a positive Good. Not only in Spain, but in many other regions, where there is a better cause, the wrong people too often uphold it; where there is a worse cause, it is too often defended by men of good will.

M. Bernanos does not pose as a physician with a ready cure for the evils which he denounces. However, he seems to hope that it may yet be possible to mobilize in a last defence of honour and truth those who, like Cato of Utica, love true liberty more dearly than they love their lives. We believe that this is indeed the only hope. The Roman Empire was sacked by barbarians, but the essence of civilization was preserved, because throughout the dark centuries there were always a few who never forgot the ancient virtues, or that honour and truth and spiritual liberty are more important than life itself.

Students of Theosophy have a special and glorious opportunity to make such a belief an effective power, a power which may yet save humanity from a Dark Age far more desolate than its predecessor. But this power will not be gained by trying to force one more ideology upon a world already overburdened with "ideas", which it cannot understand and which only enflame its elemental passions. One makes honour and truth and liberty manifest to others, by becoming oneself honourable and true and free. Y.L.

The Occult Way, by P. G. Bowen; Rider & Co., London, 1938; price, 10*s*. 6*d*.

It would have been difficult to out-do the pretensions of Mrs. Besant and Leadbeater to occult attainment,—pretensions continued on their own behalf by those ("Bishop" Arundale among them) upon whom Mrs. Besant and her tutelary genius conferred "Arhatship". But Adyar now has a rival, Mr. P. G. Bowen, author of *The Sayings of the Ancient One*, published a few years ago, and, quite recently, of the book under review, *The Occult Way*. On the title-page of this book Mr. Bowen is described as President of The Hermetic Society, Dublin, which was formed by George W. Russell ("A.E.") when the latter, at one time an ardent supporter of Judge, lost his bearings, in the theosophic sense, after the schism of Mrs. Tingley. It is claimed that, "This book was written in fulfilment of a task laid upon the author by the late A.E." We doubt, however, if George Russell would at any time have countenanced its contents. So far as we are aware, he never went astray in his fidelity to the standards of H.P.B. and Judge in matters of sex, while one of our most serious objections to Mr. Bowen's occult claims is that his teaching under this head would have been repudiated by H.P.B. and Judge with all the vigour of which they were capable. In these matters they were absolutely uncompromising, as every representative of the Great Lodge must be. It is an infallible test, which Adyar notoriously has not survived, and which Mr. Bowen not only discards but reverses, going so far as to class celibacy with "unnatural practices" in sex as conducive "to mediumship and other undesirable psychic states", declaring further that "a completely celibate life, except for a few exceptional persons, is *a definite bar to advance* beyond the scope of Lesson IV" (an elementary stage). Judge would

have stigmatized this as monstrous, and as proof in itself of Black, not of White Lodge origin.

Mr. Bowen claims for *The Sayings of the Ancient One*, and for the teachings of his *Occult Way*, that he owes them to ancient manuscripts, written in "an archaic form of Bantu [Zulu] unknown to Philology", and explained to him by adepts of an African school. Such claims are not original, and may be distorted psychic echoes, although, on the other hand, schools of that nature—survivals from Atlantean days—are known to exist, and are known to be regarded as evil by the Masters served by H.P.B. and Judge.

This warning is all the more necessary because the author refers to *The Secret Doctrine*, *Light on the Path*, *Letters that have Helped Me*, and to translations by Charles Johnston, with approval, and because, without acknowledging his indebtedness, he obviously derives enough from those sources to serve as a cloak for the objectionable features of his teaching. T.

Master Kung: The Story of Confucius, by Carl Crow; Harper & Brothers, New York and London, 1938; price, $3.50.

It is not easy to write the biography of a sage, for the simple reason that wisdom can only be understood truly by the wise. "We find what we bring." Thus every great religious leader has been persistently misrepresented by his so-called followers. Some apprehension of this fact seems to have impelled Mr. Crow to write this book. He likes and admires Chinese civilization, and genuinely reveres the memory of Confucius who so completely embodied the noblest qualities of the Chinese nature. But he is convinced that the Chinese themselves have lost the sense of the philosopher's real genius by converting him into a pious legend. Mr. Crow is determined to rescue Confucius from the arid speculations of the Confucian *literati*.

All the world has heard of the great Chinese sage Confucius, but few know of Master Kung, though the two characters are embodied in the same person. Master Kung is the sincere, lovable, entirely human scholar and gentleman who was born in the sixth century before Christ, lived a blameless life, suffered more disillusionments and disappointments than usually fall to the lot of men, and died feeling that his life had been a failure. Confucius was the creation of generations of later scholars who deified the man, interpreted his acts and sayings by methods which would justify this deification, and so created an intellectual Frankenstein monster, a fleshless creature conceived and born between the covers of a text-book.

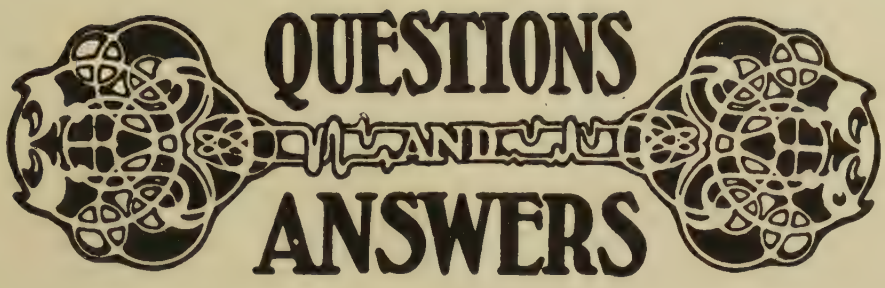
In brief, Mr. Crow has tried to reconstruct the story of Confucius from the available sources, letting the simple facts speak for themselves. We do not question his excellent intentions, nor do we seriously object to his rather liberal use of the imagination to fill in the spaces where the sources provide little or no material. But Mr. Crow cannot evade the universal law. He too has found what he has brought. Inevitably he has interpreted the facts to suit himself. He has followed the profession of journalism, and brings to his subject the preconceptions of a newspaper correspondent who instinctively looks everywhere for evidences of "politics". His "Master Kung" is, in the last analysis, a politician. To be sure, he regards Confucius as that rarest of phenomena, a genuine

idealist and reformer; but an unwary reader of this book might easily be convinced that Confucius conceived his mission to be primarily that of a political legislator and administrator.

We believe that meditation upon the sources enforces a very different interpretation. Confucius was, in our opinion, essentially a mystic to whom had come a revelation that the principles of justice and true happiness are not man-made, but are rooted in Universal or Absolute Nature, in that which his contemporary, Lao-Tse, called the Tao. He observed that the people had fallen into evil ways, because they had ceased to plan their lives in accordance with the laws of "harmonious proportion" which govern all relationships in Heaven and upon earth. The natural hierarchical order which supports all beings, had been disregarded and ruptured, both in the family and the state. The father no longer protected the child, and the child did not serve and honour the father. The prince who should have recognized his responsibility to Heaven for the contentment and virtue of his subjects, in fact thought of them as victims to be taxed to the limit for his personal glory and pleasure. To heal the maladies which were consuming China twenty-five hundred years ago, Confucius first of all strove without remission to show forth in his own life the eternal virtues, and then to form a body of disciples who would fortify and transmit the traditions of the Golden Age which he had revived. It was evidently part of his purpose to convert or at least to influence the ruling caste; for he was convinced that if the upper classes could be cured of their worst delusions, the entire social order would begin to recover. This explains his interest in the political developments of his epoch.

Mr. Crow occasionally glimpses these deeper implications of Confucius's career. He says that "in his teachings to his disciples, as well as in the example of his life, he had set up a standard of ethics and conduct which would be handed down from father to son and from teacher to disciple through many generations". There is frequent reference to the sage's life-long study of music and ceremonial and the forms of human courtesy. But Mr. Crow's emphasis is upon politics. He seems to be most comfortable when he is "reconstructing" the intrigues of princes and ministers or tracing his hero's alleged efforts to obtain office without sacrificing his principles.

When Confucius completed his edition of the ancient ballads, he expressed this simple judgment: "The three hundred odes may be summed up in one sentence: thought without depravity." Mr. Crow comments that "Master Kung established a literary standard which has placed all Chinese literature on a plane of its own, characterized by an austere morality." The general tone of this book is relatively high, if judged by conventional modern standards, but Mr. Crow would have been wise to adopt the rigorous standards of Confucius himself. Wit and humour are indispensable allies of common-sense; but it is not necessary to call them into action whenever the subject of sex is mentioned. His innuendoes upon this subject are comparatively mild, but they are none the less tiresome and irrelevant and improper. They have no place in the biography of a pure and exalted soul. S.L.



QUESTION NO. 411.—*How can one use one's belief in Reincarnation in a practical way in every-day life?*

ANSWER.—Theosophy teaches that the purpose of life is conscious union with the Divine. This stage in evolution is reached through chêlaship, for which the vast majority of mankind is not yet ready, but is a goal towards which they should be aiming and striving. In the years since H.P.B. brought to the West, knowledge of the Eastern Wisdom, reincarnation has become familiar, in name at least, and a perceptibly larger number of people in the West profess belief in it. Many, however, regard it merely as an interesting subject of speculation, and through indifference or sloth do nothing about it. Others use it as a means of flattering their vanity in various ways, such as imagining that in a past life they were some noted persons or accomplished wonderful deeds. Others use it as an excuse for making no attempt to reach the ultimate goal of humanity on the ground that they have any number of lives in which to accomplish that purpose.

One way of looking at the subject of reincarnation is to attempt to realize the truth of the theosophical statement that past, present and future are one, and that time is an illusion. What we are to-day is the result of what we have been in past incarnations,—our faults, weaknesses and sins, also our good qualities, such as they are. What we shall be in the future will depend upon what we accomplish in this incarnation, and every thought, every word, every act in the present has a direct and important bearing upon our next incarnation. It has been said that one reason why most people cannot remember past incarnations is that they are unable to remember the happenings of their present lives. A helpful practice would be to try to recall at the end of each day the events of the day and every thought, word and act. If we were to adopt the practice of making a daily resolution, and of examining ourselves to learn wherein we have failed to carry it out, and the reasons therefor, we should be aided greatly in recollection, and enabled in time to become conscious of every thought that passes through our minds, and our reaction to it. G.H.M.

ANSWER.—What is needed is *conviction* of the truth of reincarnation. Many people believe in reincarnation, but do next to nothing about it. To students of Theosophy, however, reincarnation should be a dominant fact of life, about which at present there is one *very practical* and all-important thing to be done: to contribute, each in his own way, towards the birth of chêlaship from within the ranks of the Society. We know that century after century, during the last quarter, the Lodge has tried unsuccessfully to gather together a comparatively small group of people whose unselfishness and devotion would make it possible to keep the outer expression of the Movement alive in the world over the turn of the century. This time, however, the Society—founded by the Lodge Messenger, Madame Blavatsky, and by Mr. Judge and others, in 1875, as the present outer expression of the Movement—has been carried over the turn of the cycle and into the second quarter of the twentieth century. In other words, the *reincarnation* of the Movement has reached a "dead centre", a point at which chêlaship is necessary if the T.S. is to continue actively in the world. Theosophical philosophy makes

clear that we do not reincarnate at random, but are drawn back into the world, time after time, in groups. With the help of the Masters, we can succeed this time, if we act in whole-hearted unison with the *age-old comrades* of our corps. It is said that chêlas work together as the fingers of one hand. G.M.W.K.

ANSWER.—A conviction of the truth of reincarnation transforms one's entire scale of values. Those who regard each life-time as only a day in the pilgrimage of an immortal soul, who realize that their own past actions, desires and thoughts have made them what they now are, that they can change these as they change themselves, their future being absolutely in their own hands to make or mar, and that the qualities they win may be theirs for all eternity, —have every incentive to fight and fight hard. If you were packing a spiritual suit-case, what qualities would you want to take with you for your next life? What kind of man do you want to be—indolent, self-indulgent, boorish in manner, cowardly in action, vain, self-deceived? Or valorous, resourceful, hard-working, clear-sighted, with a sense of humour, an aristocrat at heart whatever the outer circumstances? To make a list of the qualities one would want, is illuminating. What a man desires and works for—or desires and yields to—to-day, determines what he will become "next time".

It is helpful to look forward; it is also helpful to look back, imagining ourselves in our next incarnation to be remembering this one. In that light, how does a contemplated course of action appear? What should we like to remember having done? There are few better ways of attaining to detachment. A belief in reincarnation may also be a great aid to contentment of heart. There is so much, in this rich and varied world, that one would like for oneself and for those one loves, and that one knows will not be attained in this life. Never mind. There will be many other lives and many other opportunities.

To those who are seeking discipleship, seeking to fit themselves to aid in the work of Masters for the world, the belief in reincarnation gives significance to every event. Masters are interested not only in religion, but in every department of human activity—in music, art, statecraft, diplomacy, business—in whatever affects the souls and characters of men. Those who would aid them, must be prepared to work in any sphere and must seek to fit themselves to do so. They must desire all abilities and all talents, and to eliminate all weaknesses. Every event then becomes an opportunity to gain or to strengthen some quality they would wish to have, to be able to place it at the service of their Master, to widen the field in which they can be used, and to make their service more efficient. J.F.B.M.

NOTICE

The regular meetings of the New York Branch of The Theosophical Society will be held throughout the winter and spring at 64, Washington Mews (between Washington Square and East Eighth Street), on alternate Saturday evenings, beginning at half-past eight and closing at ten o'clock. Branch members will receive a printed announcement giving the dates. The same announcement will also be mailed to non-members who send their names to the Secretary T.S., P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York. Out-of-town members of the Society are invited to attend these meetings whenever they are in New York, and visitors who may be interested in Theosophy are always welcome.

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